



DARK NIGHTS

1

DEATHMATE

Ready
FOR
The
ENCORE?!

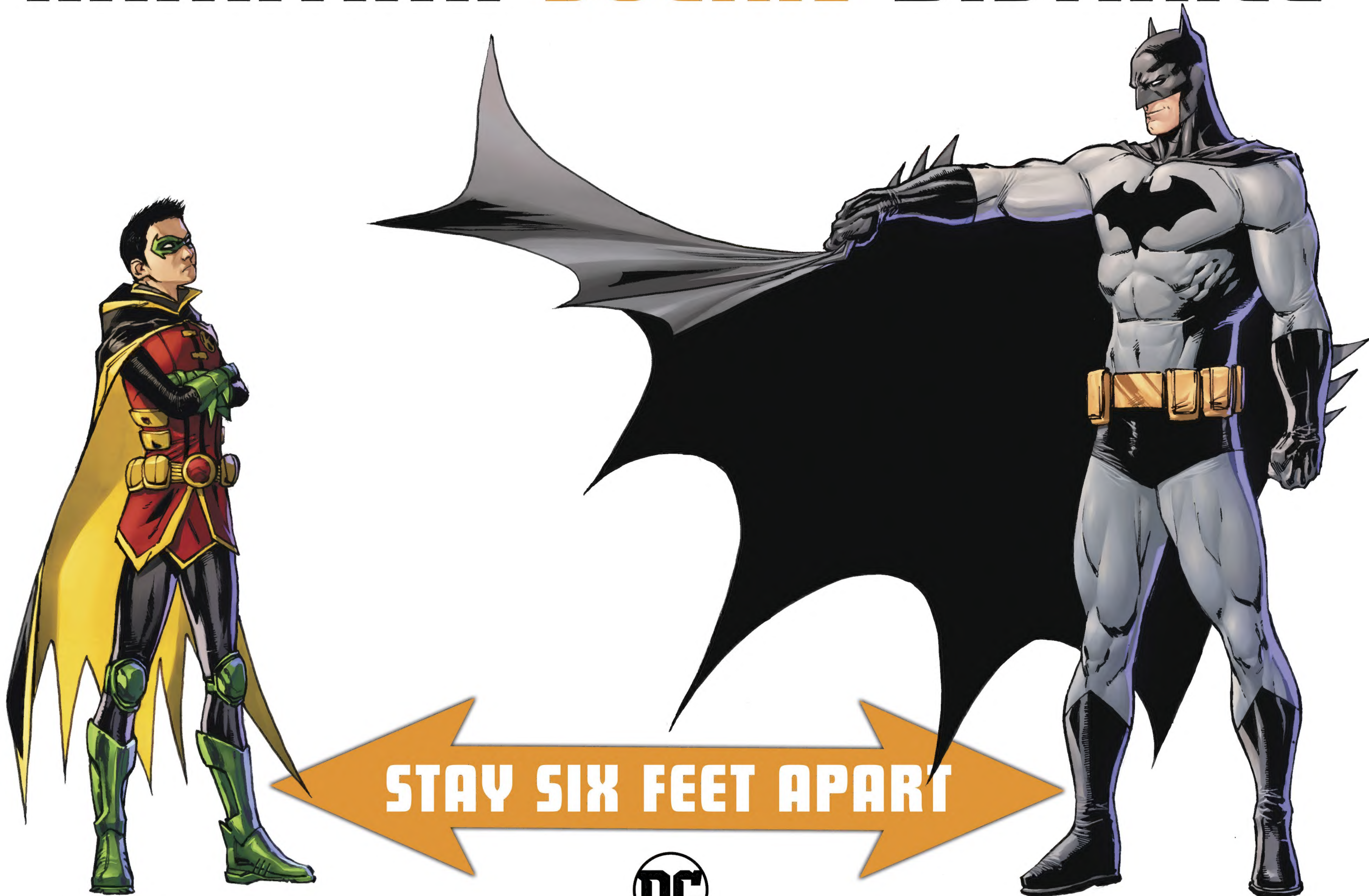


Capullo
Z0 + fco
A. J. PLASCENCIA

SNYDER + CAPULLO + GLADSON + PLASCENCIA

AGES 13+

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE



BOOM
THOOM
RRR
UMBLE



SERGEANT, THE *HIT* YOU TOOK, YOU'RE *SEEING* THINGS. LET'S MOVE! WE'RE LOSING GR--

KEEP YOUR TRUNKS ON, FLYBOY. WE GOTTA BE STRAIGHT WITH THEM. LET 'EM KNOW WHAT THEY'RE GETTING INTO.

TRUTH IS, IT'S ROUGH OUT THERE.



ALL RIGHT. *MORE* THAN ROUGH. IT'S A GRADE-A TURDBURGER NONE OF US SAW.

IT'S LIKE YOU'RE AT THE DRIVE-THROUGH AND OUT COMES YOUR JUICY HALF-POUNDER ON ONE OF THEM NIICE FRENCH BUNS, CURLY FRIES TOO, AND YOU TAKE A BITE AND *WHAM!*

TURD.
AND YOUR FRIES?
KABLAM!

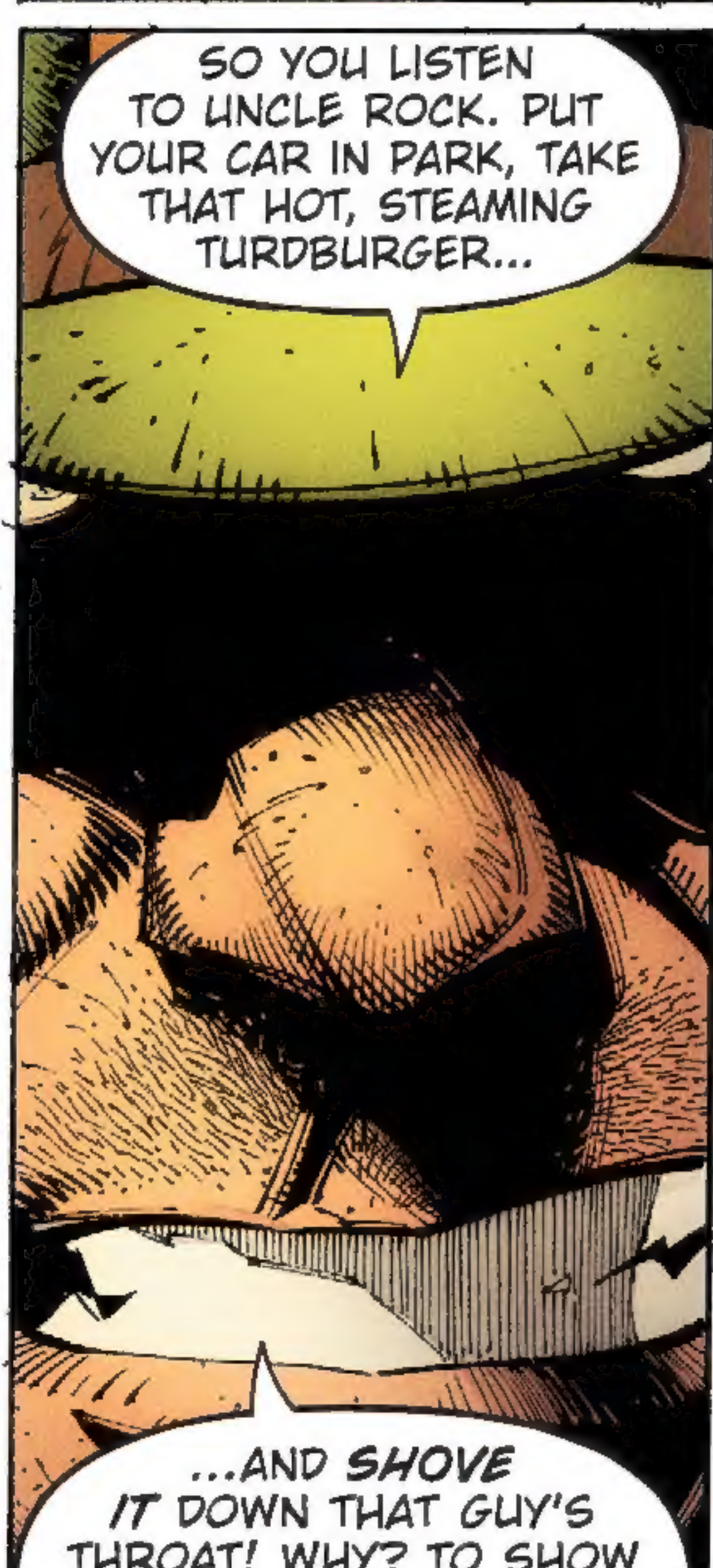
CURLY TURDS.



AND THE GUY INSIDE? HE'S SMILING, SAYING NO REFUNDS. SO HERE WE ARE, NO WARNING, NO REASON. IN A NEW WORLD... OF TURDS.

NOW MAYBE I AM "SEEING THINGS" OUT THERE. BUT WHAT I SEE ARE...

...SOLDIERS.



...AND *SHOVE* IT DOWN THAT GUY'S THROAT! WHY? TO SHOW HIM--SHOW 'EM ALL--WE'RE STILL *HERE*, WE'RE FIGHTING BACK...



...AND WE'RE GOING TO HAVE SOME *%\$%\$ FUN DOING IT. OORAH.

DEATH METAL

AN ANTI-CRISIS + PART I + IT ALL MATTERS

BY SCOTT "HALLOWED BE THY NAME" SNYDER
&
GREG "PAINKILLER" CAPULLO



WITH

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1:25 VARIANT COVER BY DOUG "BREAKIN' THE LAW" MAHNKE

& DAVID "FAST AS A SHARK" BARON

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SUPERMAN CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL AND JOE SHUSTER
BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE JERRY SIEGEL FAMILY





HELL.
FORMERLY THEMYSKIRA. THE DCU.
[YES, THE REAL DCU.]

WONDER
WOMAN.



DIANA!

I BRING
NEWS.

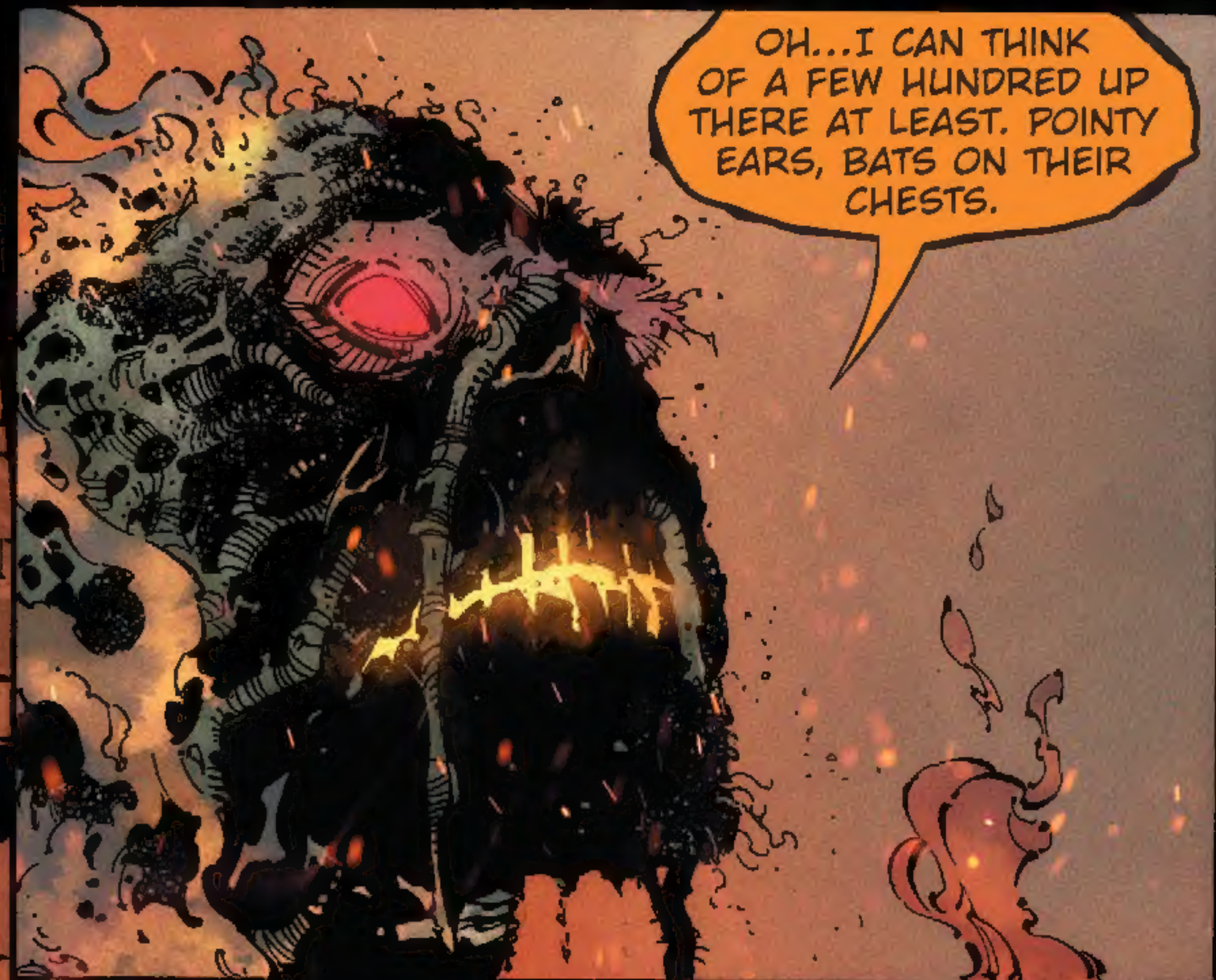
WELL?
BAD? OR
WORSE?





HE'S COMING. AND HE'S BRINGING A PRISONER.

HEH. I DIDN'T KNOW THERE WERE VILLAINS *LEFT* IN THE WORLD ABOVE TO IMPRISON HERE, *SWAMP THING*.



OH...I CAN THINK OF A FEW HUNDRED UP THERE AT LEAST. POINTY EARS, BATS ON THEIR CHESTS.



YOU'RE IN A MOOD, ALEC. WHO IS HE BRINGING?

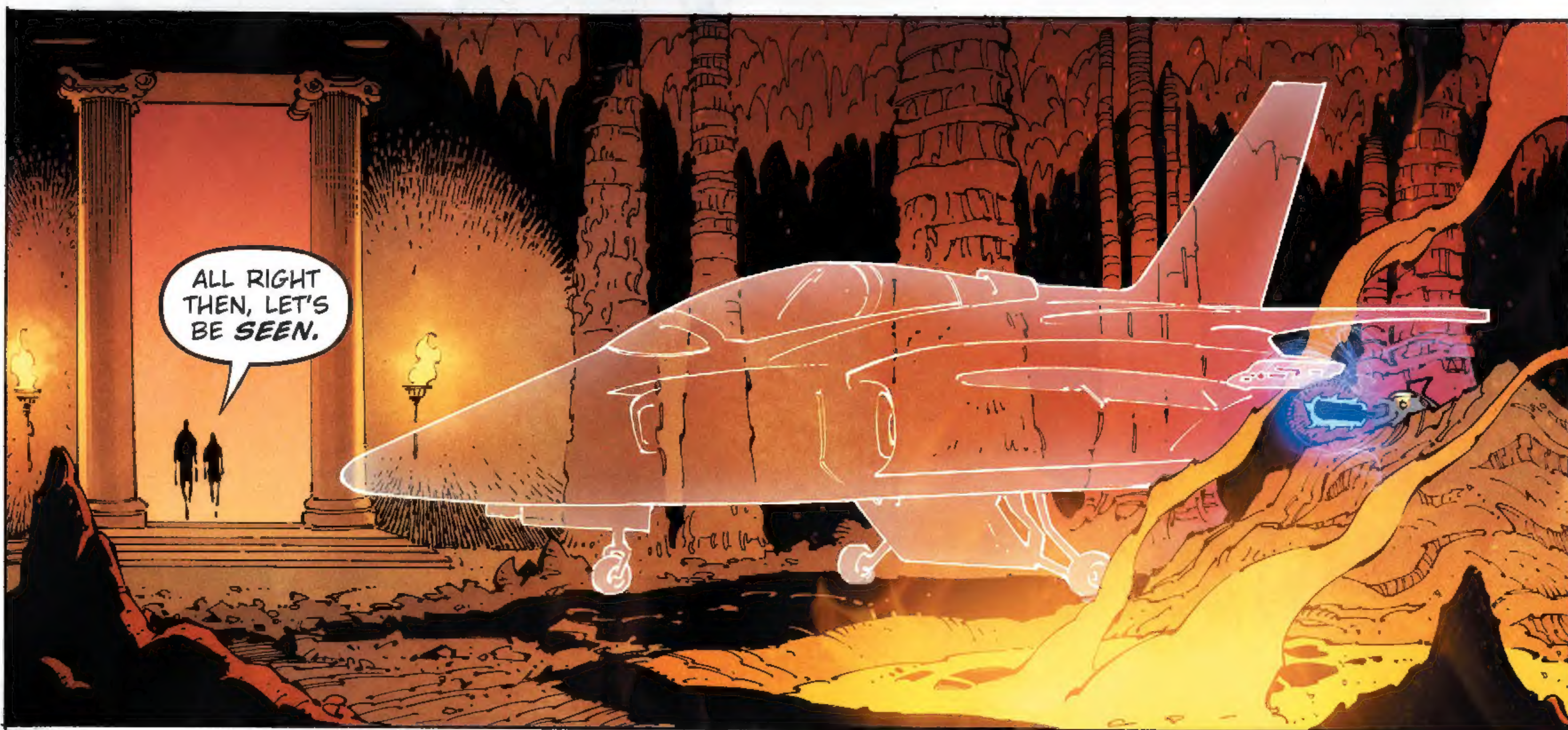
I'M NOT SURE, BUT IT'S SOMEONE IMPORTANT. HE HAS MUSCLE WITH HIM. I SENSE... *THREE BATS*.



THREE?!

WHAT PRISONER NEEDS THAT KIND OF PROTECTION?

I DON'T KNOW BUT THEY'RE HERE TO SEE YOU.



ALL RIGHT THEN, LET'S BE *SEEN*.



COME ON, LET US OUT!

YOU CAN'T KEEP US IN HERE FOREVER!

DON'T LET THEM GET UNDER YOUR SKIN, DIANA. YOU ARE SAVING THEM, AND MANY MORE THAN THEM, BY PLAYING THIS PART. THINK OF YOUR SISTERS...

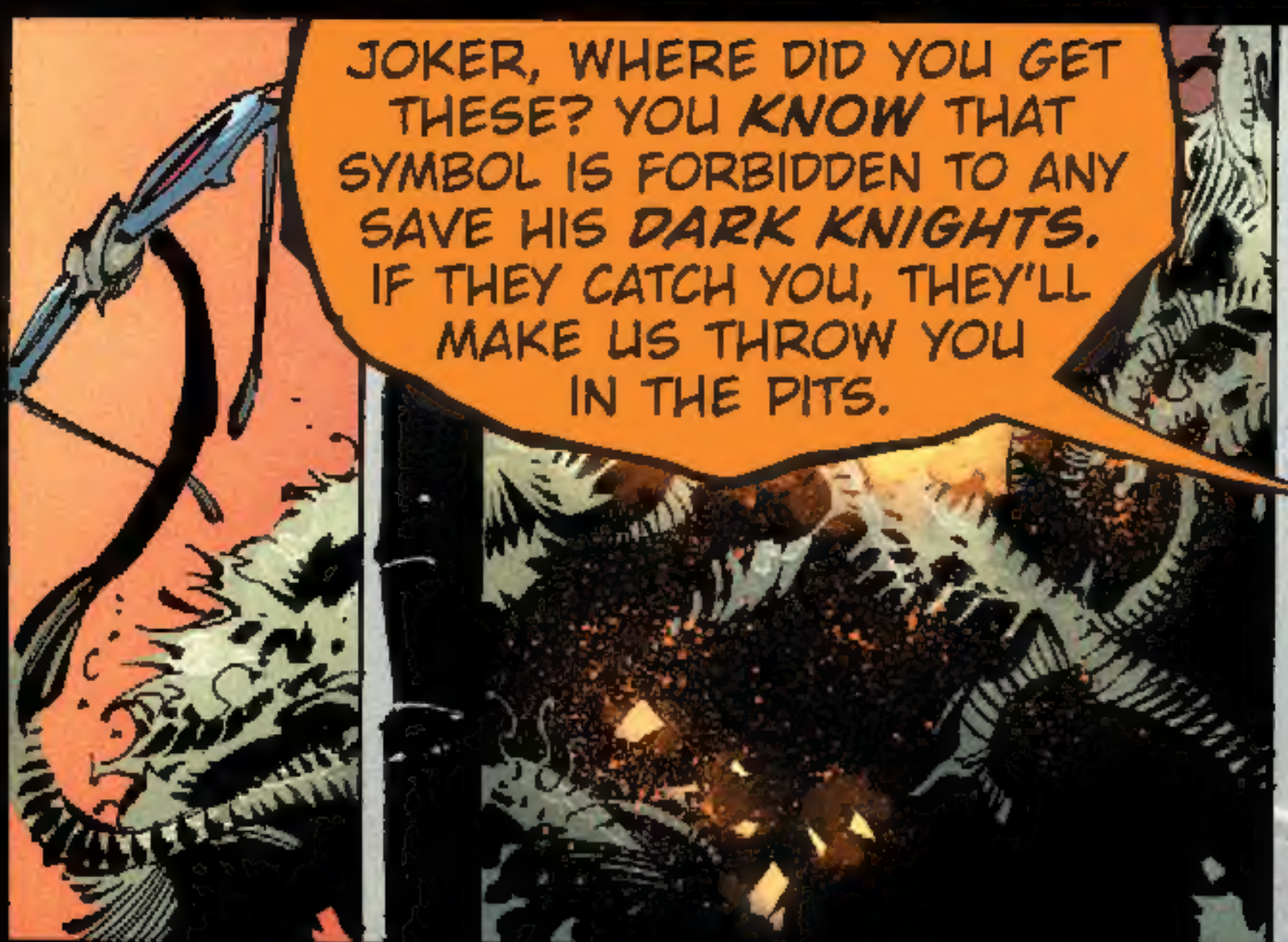
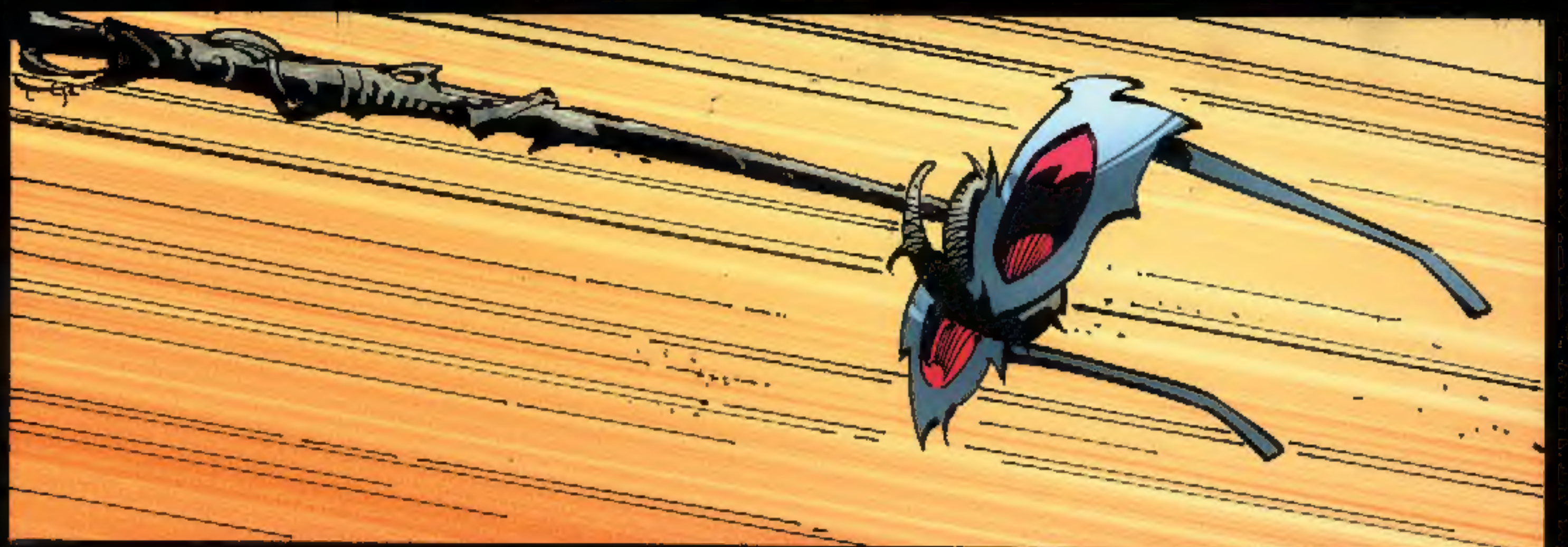
I THINK ABOUT THEM EVERY DAY. AND MY FRIENDS. AND ALL THE GOOD PEOPLE WHO SIDED WITH US. NOW BOUND TO THOSE ANTENNAE.

THEY'RE ALL I THINK OF TO GET ME THROUGH THIS NIGHTMARE. BUT UNTIL WE HAVE SOME WAY OF SAVING THEM--

FREE US, TYRANT!



PSSST! WONDER WARDEN! I THINK YOU'RE DOING A BANG-UP JOB, MA'AM!



JOKER, WHERE DID YOU GET THESE? YOU KNOW THAT SYMBOL IS FORBIDDEN TO ANY SAVE HIS DARK KNIGHTS. IF THEY CATCH YOU, THEY'LL MAKE US THROW YOU IN THE PITS.



HEY, GO AHEAD!

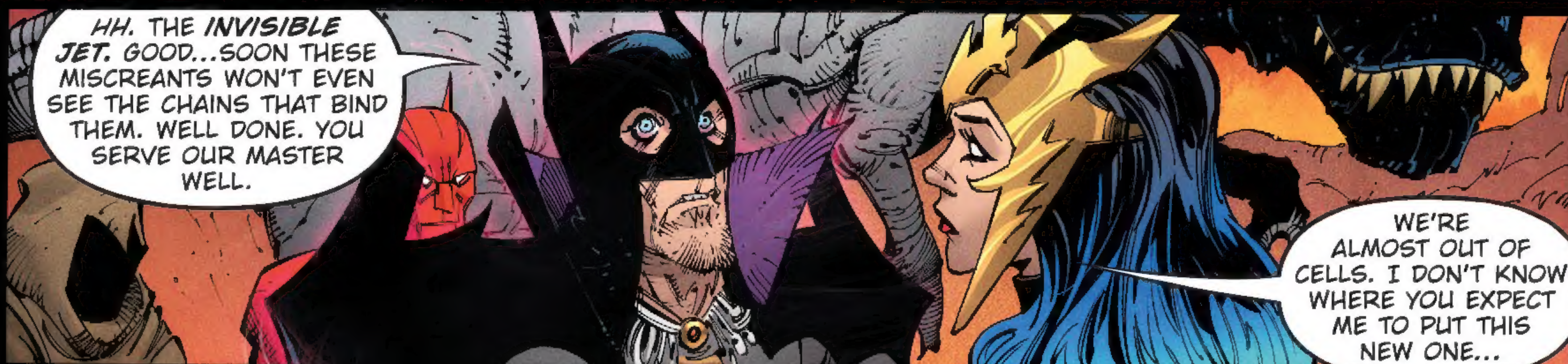
THE WORLD UP THERE IS RULED BY BATMEN. SO TO ME? DOWN HERE REALLY IS PARADISE ISLAND!

HAHAHAHA!



DIANA. YOU TOOK YOUR TIME.

I WAS BUSY DISPOSING OF MY OLD JET, ON YOUR MASTER'S ORDERS...AND I WOULDN'T WANT TO INSULT YOU BY NOT DRESSING IN THE FULL REGALIA.



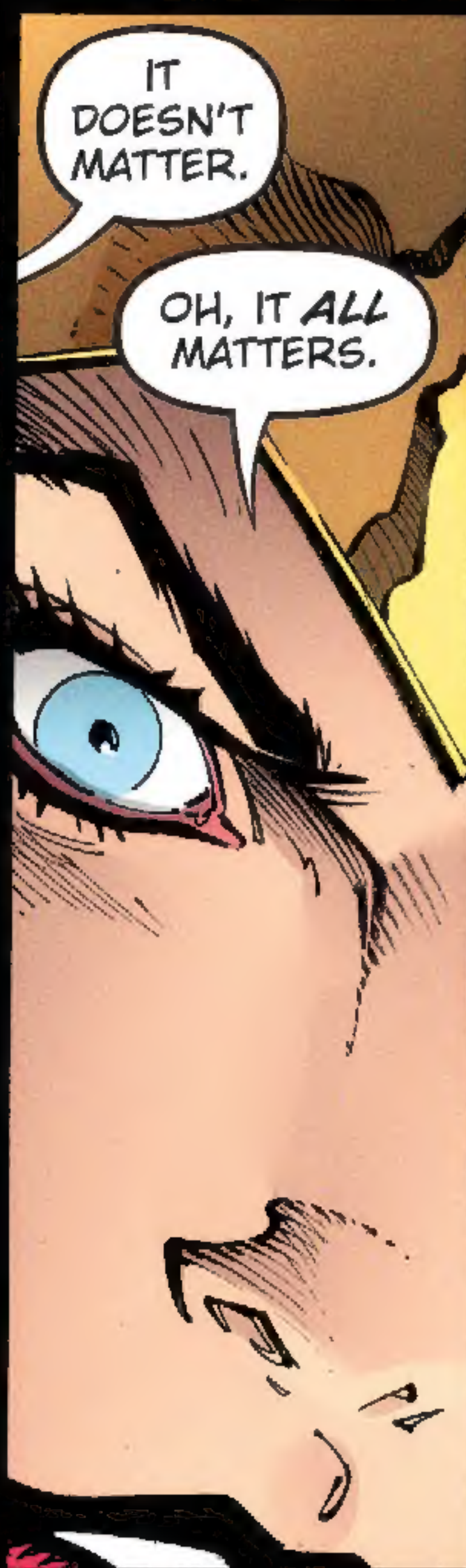
HH. THE INVISIBLE JET. GOOD...SOON THESE MISCREANTS WON'T EVEN SEE THE CHAINS THAT BIND THEM. WELL DONE. YOU SERVE OUR MASTER WELL.

WE'RE ALMOST OUT OF CELLS. I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU EXPECT ME TO PUT THIS NEW ONE...



OH, THIS ONE ISN'T GOING IN A CELL. OPEN THE PITS.

THE PITS? WHO THE HELL ARE YOU ASKING ME TO LOCK UP?



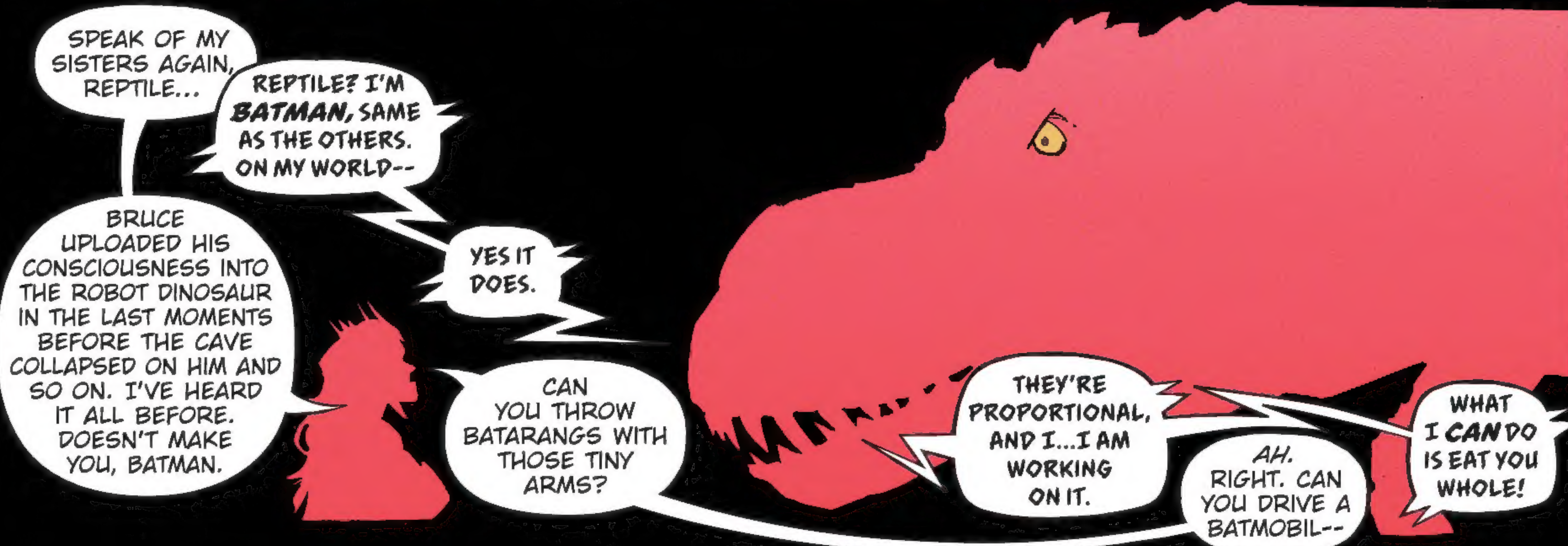
IT DOESN'T MATTER.

OH, IT ALL MATTERS.



DO AS YOU'RE TOLD!

OR IT'LL BE YOUR SISTERS SCREAMING IN THE PITS.



SPEAK OF MY SISTERS AGAIN, REPTILE...

REPTILE? I'M BATMAN, SAME AS THE OTHERS. ON MY WORLD--

BRUCE UPLOADED HIS CONSCIOUSNESS INTO THE ROBOT DINOSAUR IN THE LAST MOMENTS BEFORE THE CAVE COLLAPSED ON HIM AND SO ON. I'VE HEARD IT ALL BEFORE. DOESN'T MAKE YOU, BATMAN.

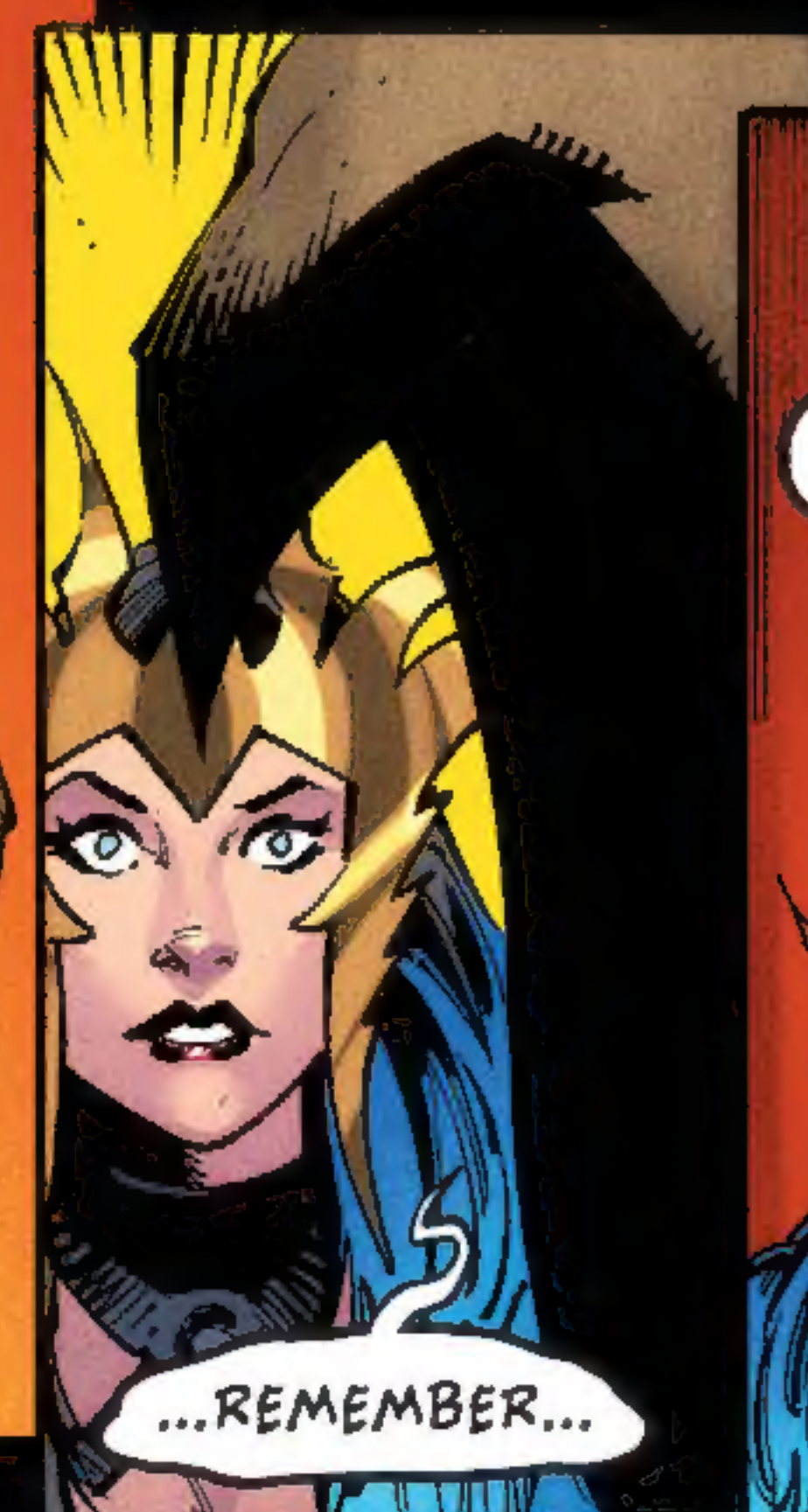
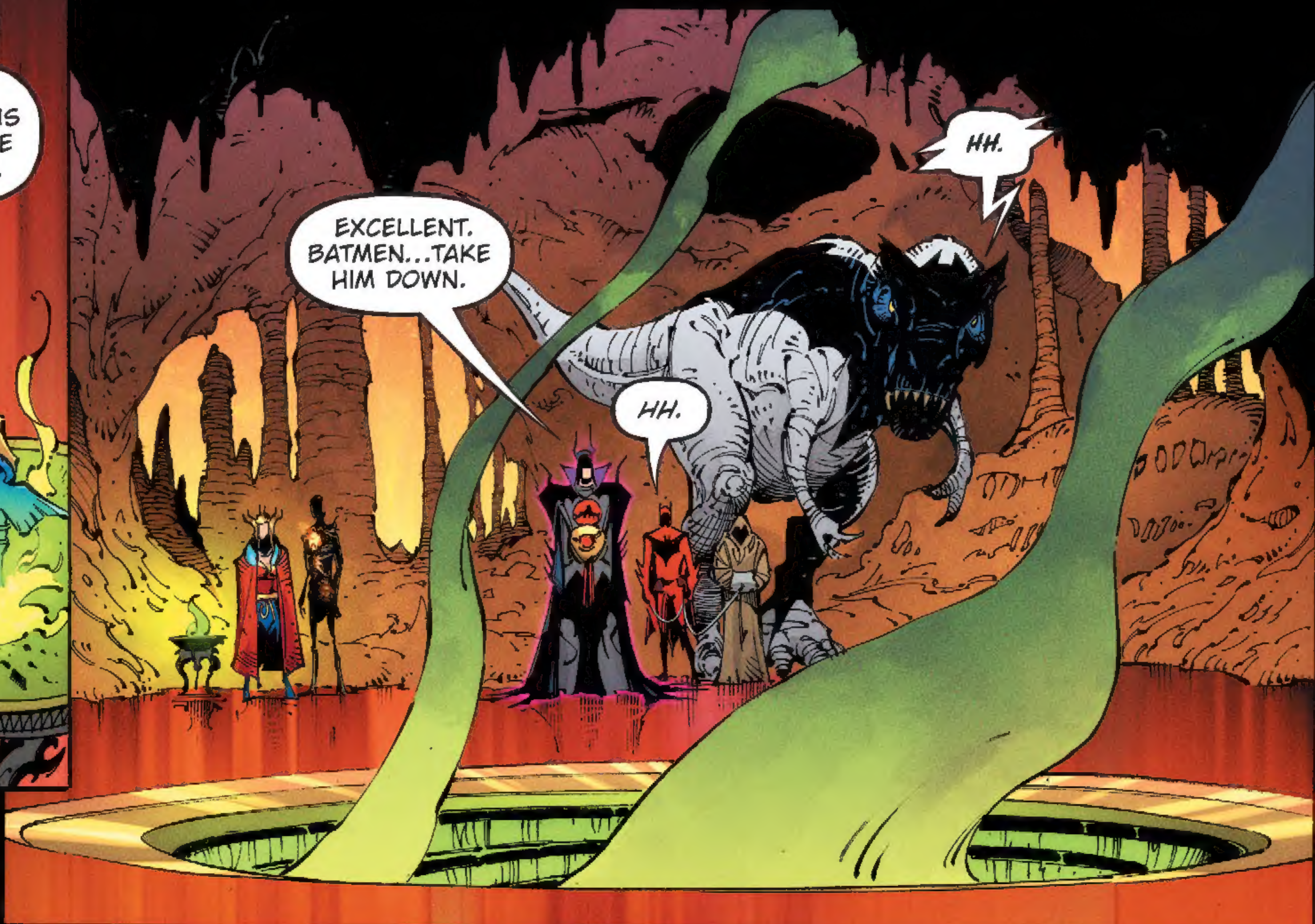
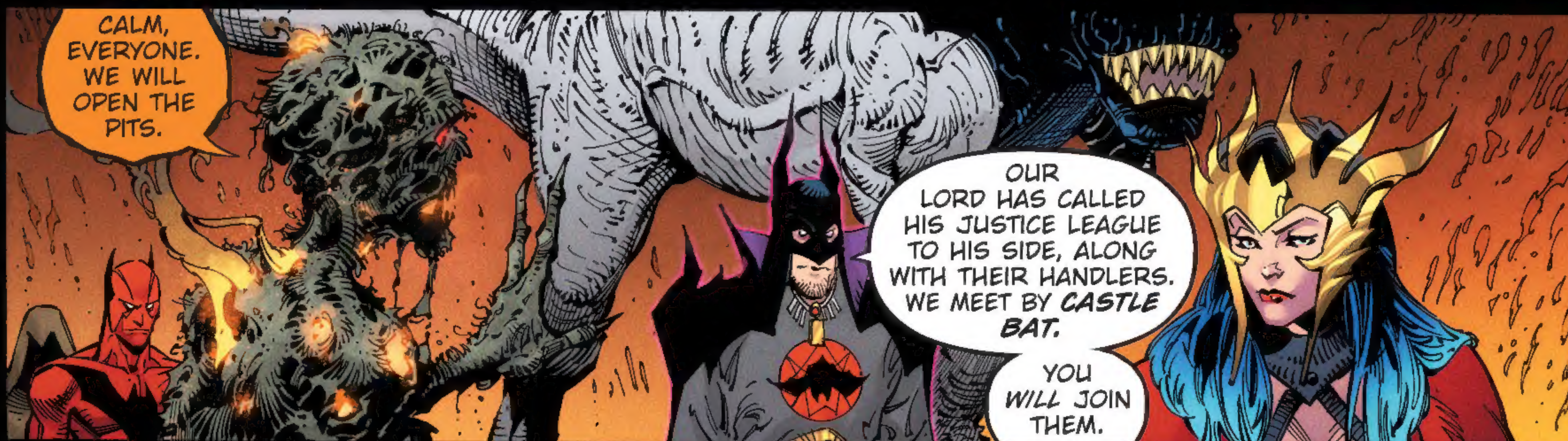
YES IT DOES.

CAN YOU THROW BATARANGS WITH THOSE TINY ARMS?

THEY'RE PROPORTIONAL, AND I...I AM WORKING ON IT.

AH. RIGHT. CAN YOU DRIVE A BATMOBIL--

WHAT I CAN DO IS EAT YOU WHOLE!





WHEN I WAS A BOY,
I LOVED COMING TO
THIS FIELD.

I TRIED OUT MY FIRST BAT
RIGHT THERE, UNDER THE OAK.
I LEARNED TO RIDE A BIKE ON
THE PATH JUST BEHIND YOU.

ONE DAY, I ASKED MY FATHER
WHY WE CAME HERE SO OFTEN,
WHEN THERE WAS ALL THE OPEN
LAND AROUND OUR HOUSE.

MY FATHER, HE TOLD ME THIS WASN'T
JUST A PARK, BUT ALSO A GRAVEYARD.
THE SITE OF A GREAT BATTLE MORE THAN
TWO AND A HALF CENTURIES EARLIER,
DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

SEE, THE BRITISH HAD TRIED TO
CRUSH THE REBEL SPIRIT OF GOTHAM
CITY BUT ALL THESE FREEDOM
FIGHTERS WOULDN'T GIVE IN.

INSTEAD THEY HID OUT IN THE
TUNNELS AND CAVERNS, FIGHTING AT
NIGHT, FROM THE SHADOWS. THEY'D
BEAT DRUMS IN THE DARK TO SPOOK
THE BRITISH BEFORE ATTACKING.

SOME EVEN
CALLED THEMSELVES
THE **DEAD BATS**.

EVENTUALLY THE BRITISH LIT THE TUNNELS
ON FIRE AND KILLED THEM ALL. LEFT THEM IN
SHALLOW GRAVES, HERE BENEATH THIS FIELD.

THEY CALLED THEM
DEADBEATS IN THE
CROWN PAPERS. DRUMS
THAT WENT SILENT.

IT SCARED ME, HEARING THIS.
ALL THOSE DEAD PEOPLE
RIGHT BENEATH THE GROUND.

BUT MY FATHER, HE GESTURED TO
THE SUNLIT FIELD AND FLOWERS AND
CHILDREN PLAYING AND HE TOLD ME,
WE DO IT TO HONOR THE DEAD.

THEY SUFFERED AND DIED IN THE DARK
TO MAKE THIS FIELD WHAT IT IS NOW. "LOOK
AROUND, SON," MY FATHER SAID. "ALL OF IT IS
A TESTAMENT TO THOSE WHO FELL, AND WHO
WILL **EVER** FALL, FIGHTING FOR GOOD."

DEAD BEATS

I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER WHAT
THOSE DEAD BATS WOULD THINK...

IF THEY COULD ONLY
SEE THE PLACE NOW!

HAHAHAHA!





OH, I KNOW, I KNOW. "YOU AGAIN? WE'RE SO SICK OF YOU."

YET HERE YOU ARE... BECAUSE DEEP DOWN YOU LOVE IT. DON'T YOU? BEING BAD WITH ME.

OR MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I'D KILL YOU IF YOU DIDN'T SHOW UP! HAHA! EITHER WAY, GIVE ME SOME GOOD NEWS, LEAGUE.



TELL ME, HAVE THERE BEEN ANY NEW CAPTURES IN YOUR TERRITORIES?

HARLEY, HUNTER OF THE WASTELANDS. DR. ARKHAM.

NOTHING.

AQUAMAN, COMMANDER OF THE BLACK FLEET, AND BATHOMET.

NAY.



DIANA, QUEEN OF THE UNDERWORLD. BATMAGE, YOU HAVE A NEW PRISONER. NOT TO BE MEDDLED WITH.

UNDERSTOOD.

MISTER MIRACLE, GUARDIAN OF NEW APOKOLIPS. DARKFATHER.

SUPERMAN HAS ALMOST SUCCEDED TO THE ANTI-LIFE.

YOU CAN SEE HIM HERE IN PROJECTION.



WELL DONE. I BROUGHT YOU HERE TO RECEIVE GOOD NEWS. PERPETUA HAS DESTROYED ANOTHER UNIVERSE.



EARTH-22. THEY FOUGHT. POINTLESSLY.

OUT OF 52, ONLY EIGHT REMAIN. ONCE THEY ARE GONE, OUR QUEEN AND I WILL REMAKE THIS UNIVERSE AS WE PLEASE.

AND YOU... FOR YOUR SERVICE YOU WILL EACH BE GIVEN A PLANET WHERE YOU CAN WATCH OVER THOSE YOU WOULD PROTECT.



DIANA, CAN YOU HEAR ME?

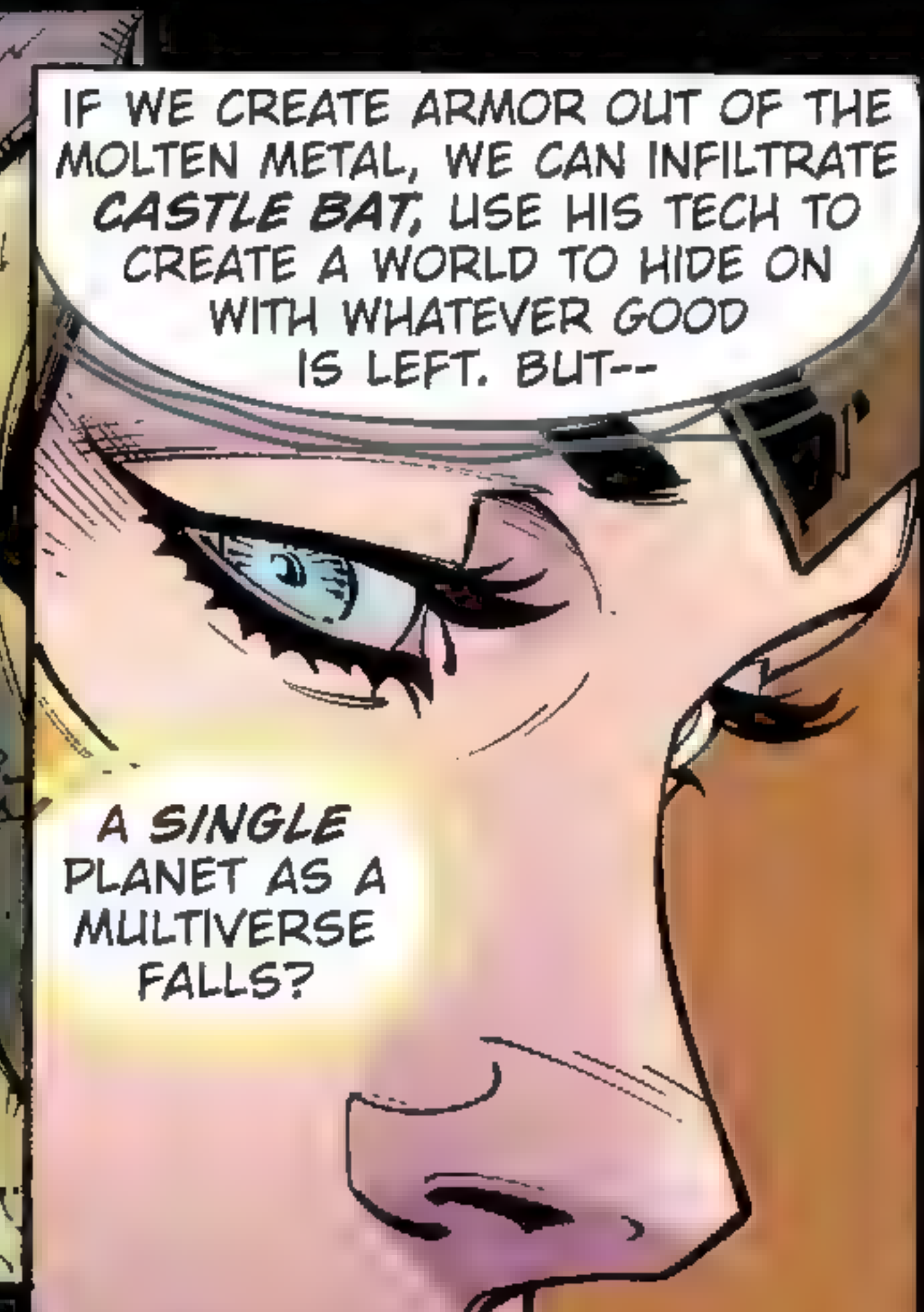
...BATMAN? HOW--



WHEN J'ONN SET UP THE PSYCHIC LINK, I BUILT MY OWN VERSION OF THE SIGNAL. JUST IN CASE.

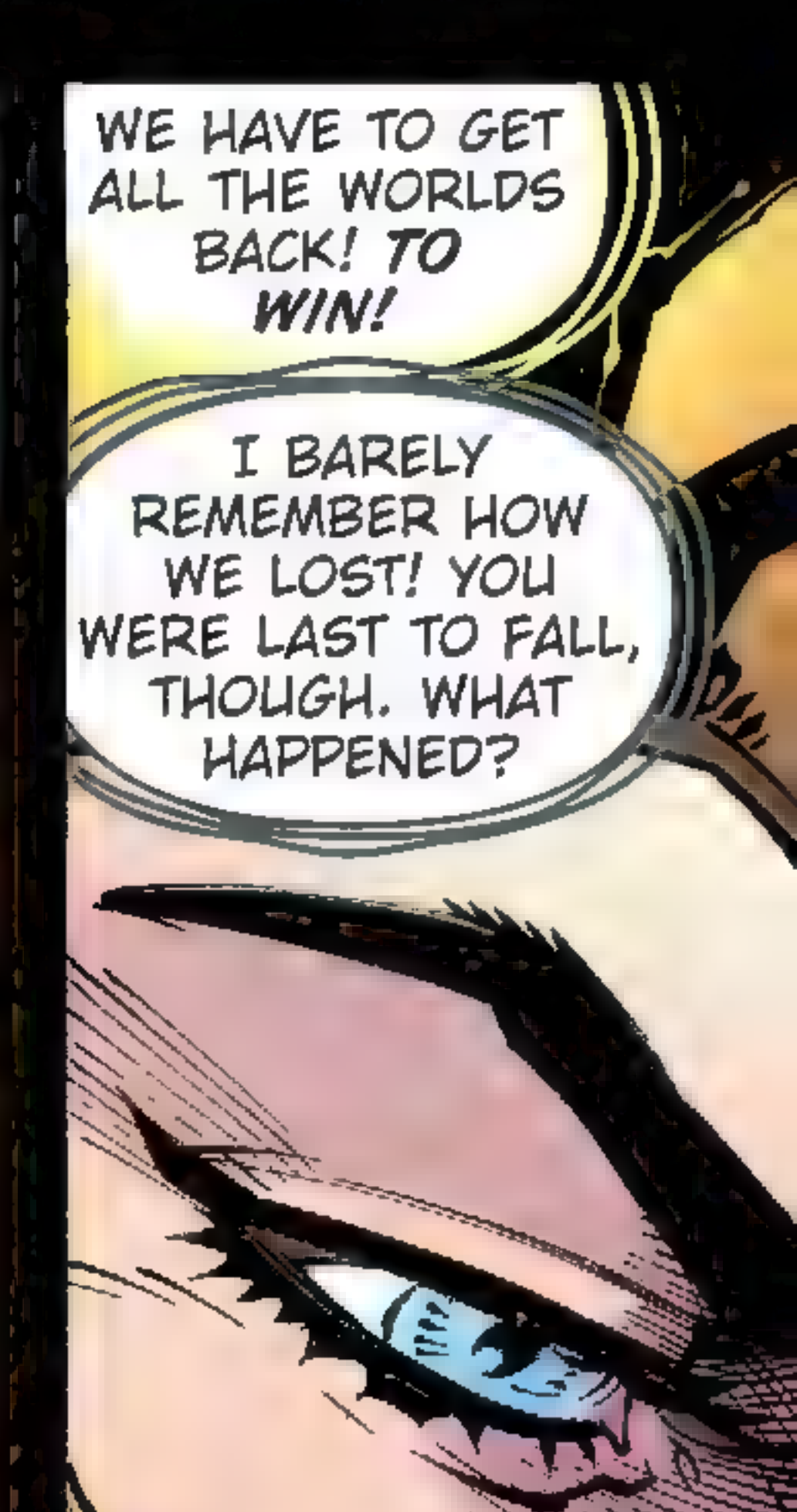
SO A BAT-PHONE TO OUR BRAINS. ONE WE CAN'T HANG UP. OF COURSE. JUST PLEASE TELL ME YOU'RE FAR FROM HERE.

ACROSS THE UNIVERSE. BUT LISTEN, YOU JUST MELTED DOWN THE JET. ITS MAGIC... I COULD NEVER DETECT IT COMING OR GOING.



IF WE CREATE ARMOR OUT OF THE MOLTEN METAL, WE CAN INFILTRATE CASTLE BAT, USE HIS TECH TO CREATE A WORLD TO HIDE ON WITH WHATEVER GOOD IS LEFT. BUT--

A SINGLE PLANET AS A MULTIVERSE FALLS?

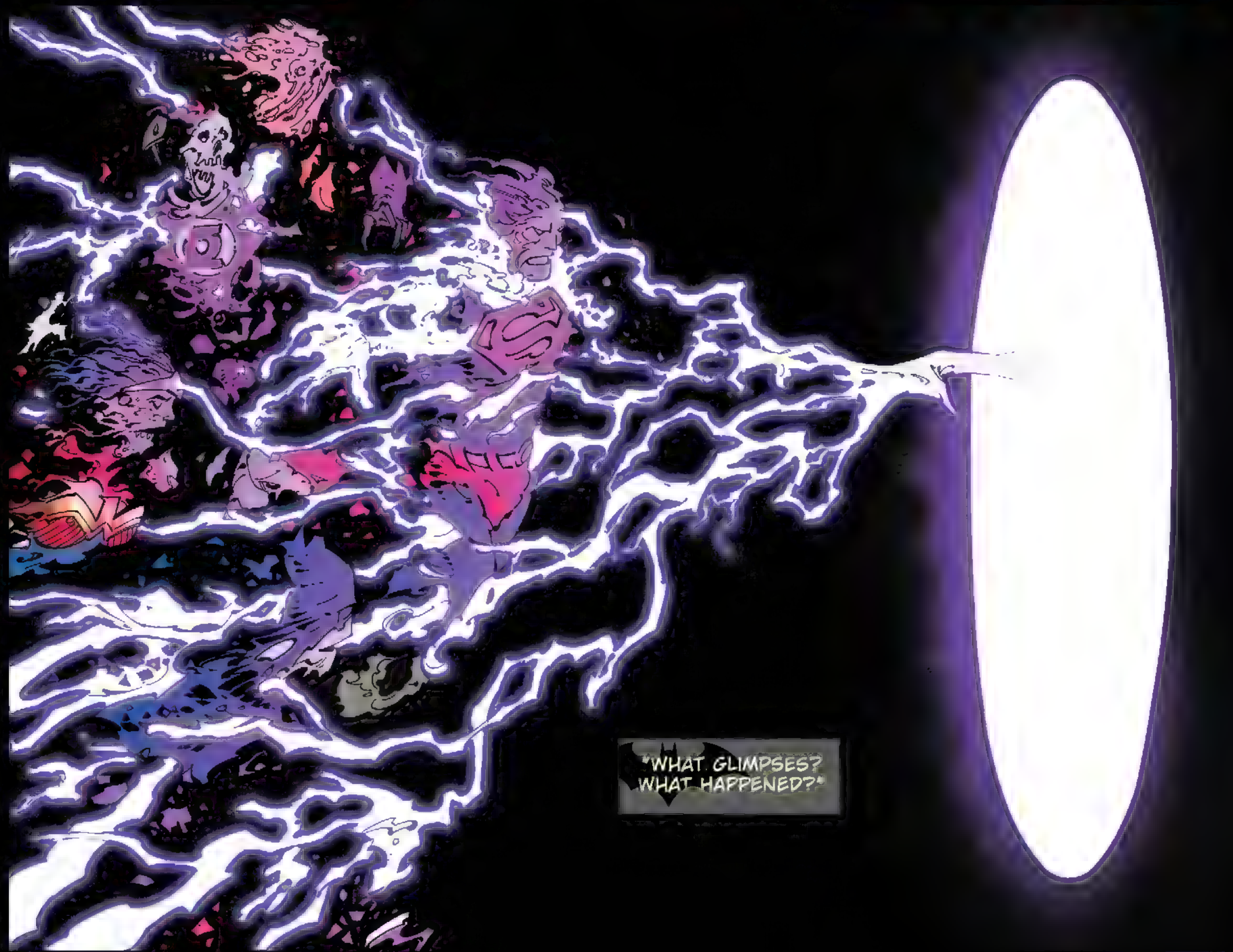


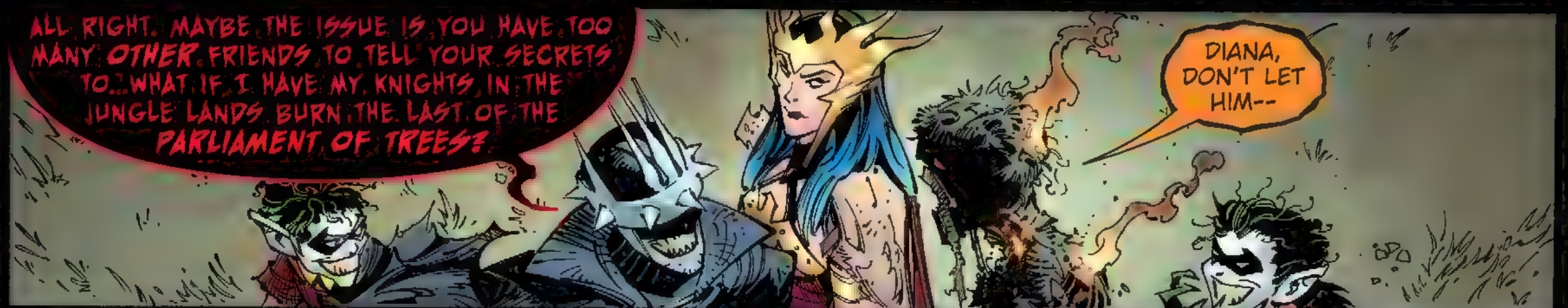
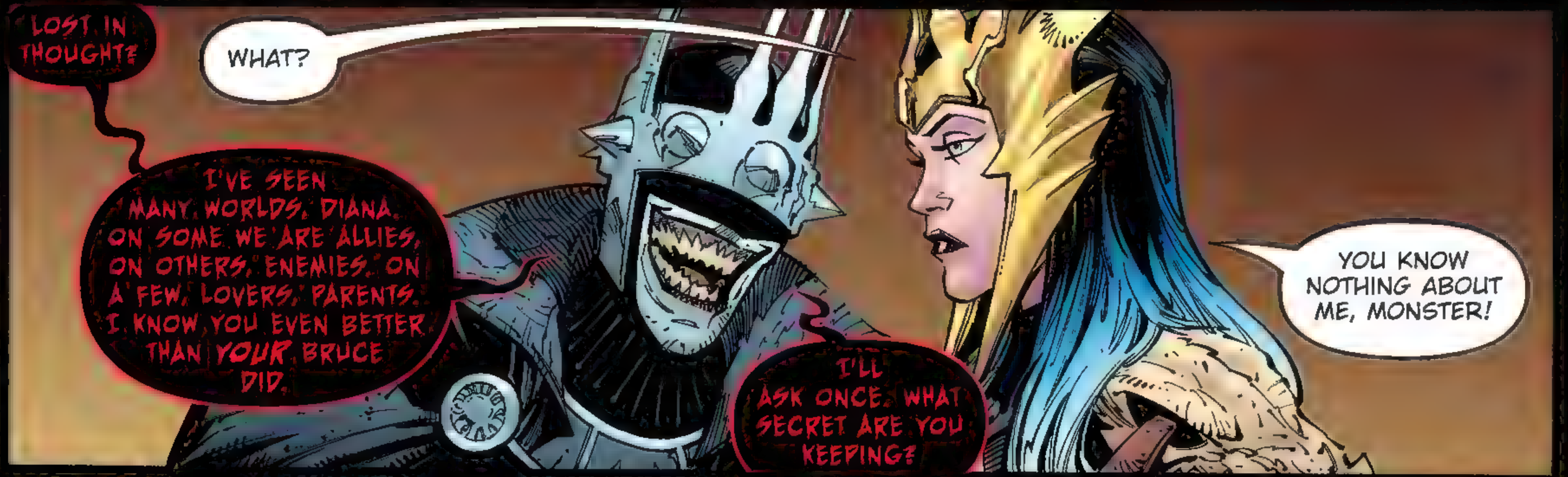
WE HAVE TO GET ALL THE WORLDS BACK! TO WIN!

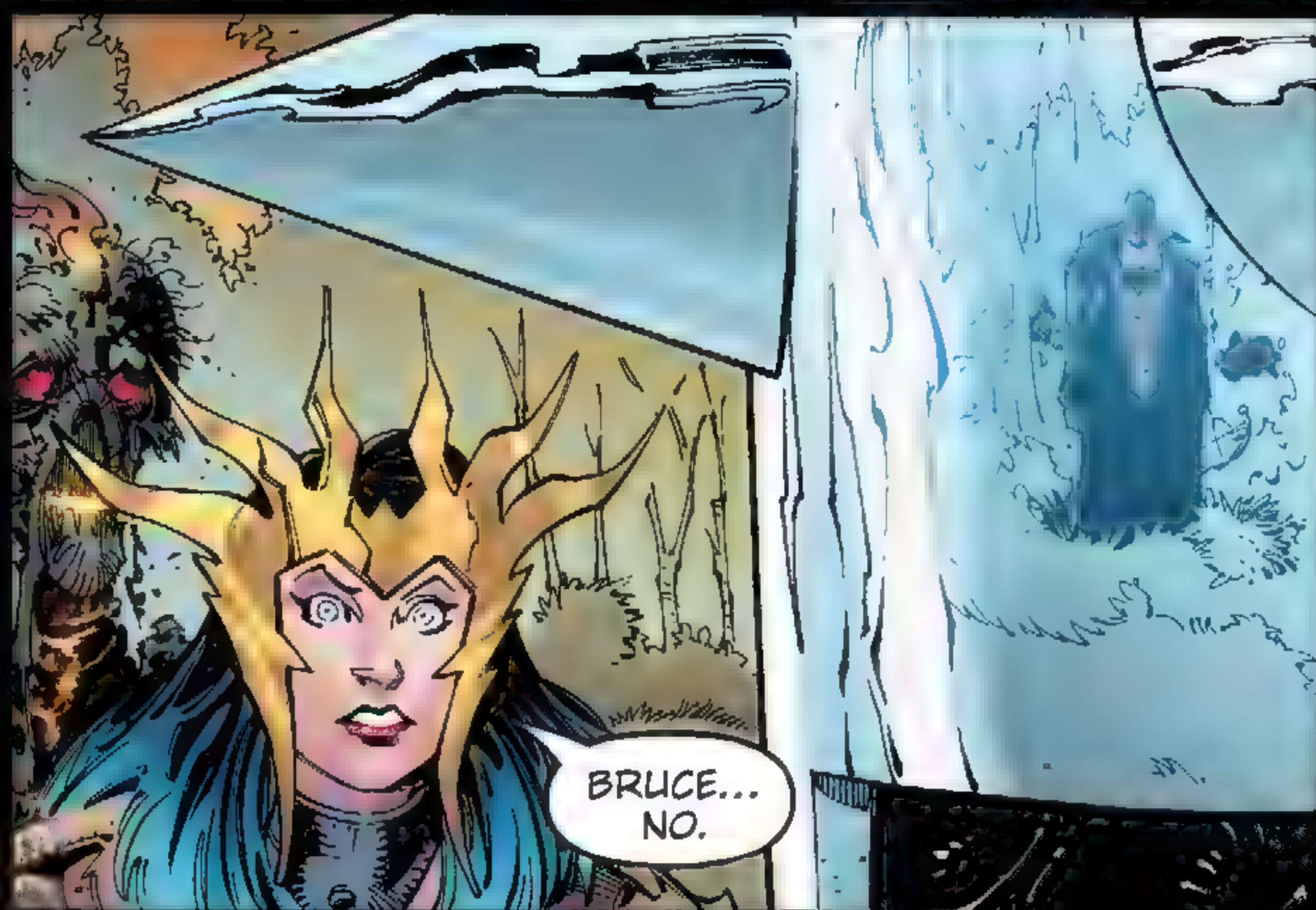
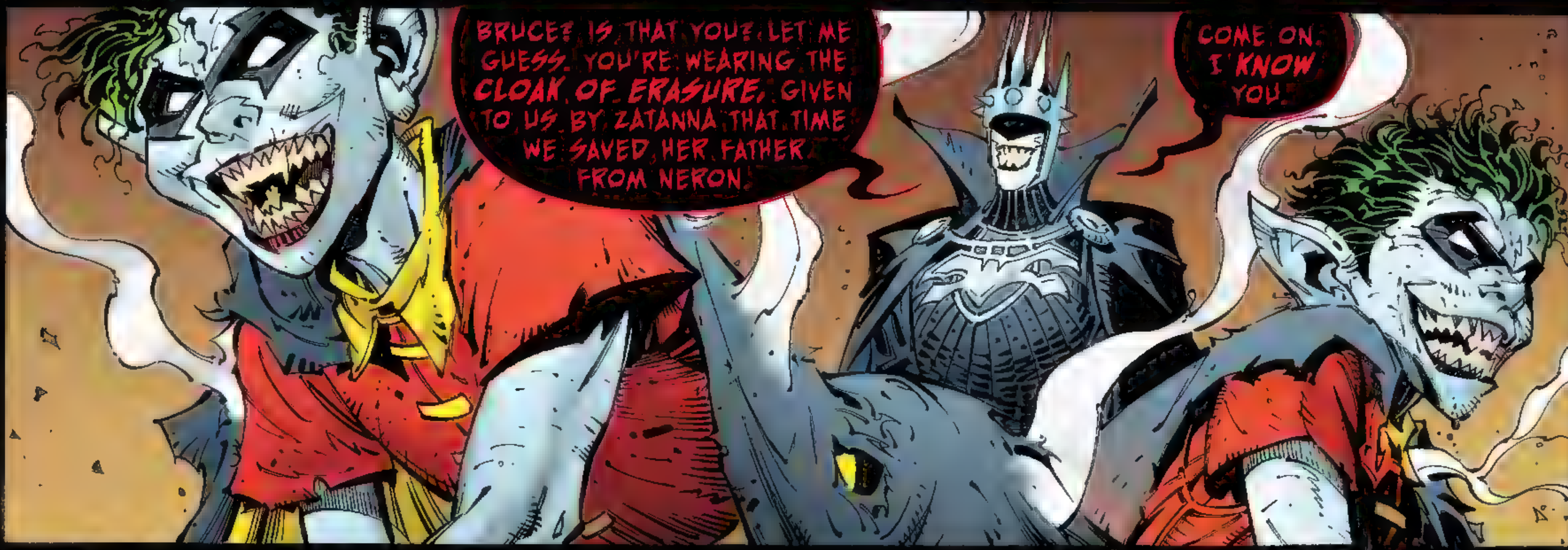
I BARELY REMEMBER HOW WE LOST! YOU WERE LAST TO FALL, THOUGH. WHAT HAPPENED?

"I... I REMEMBER..."

"... ONLY GLIMPSES..."

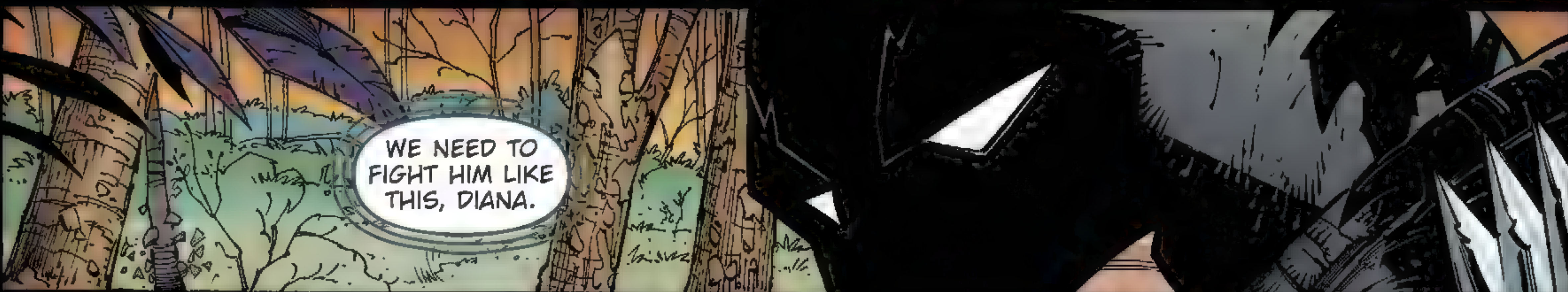






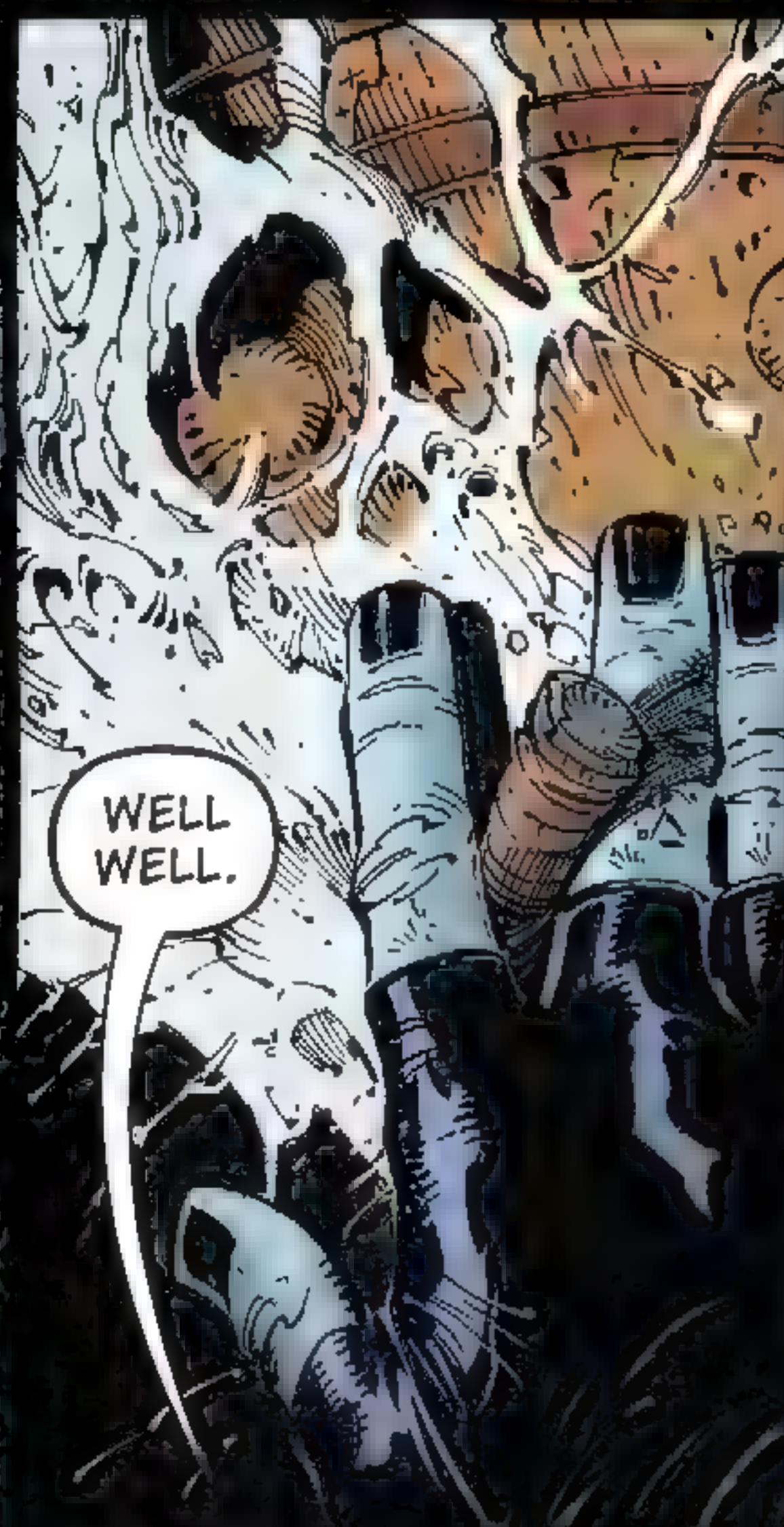
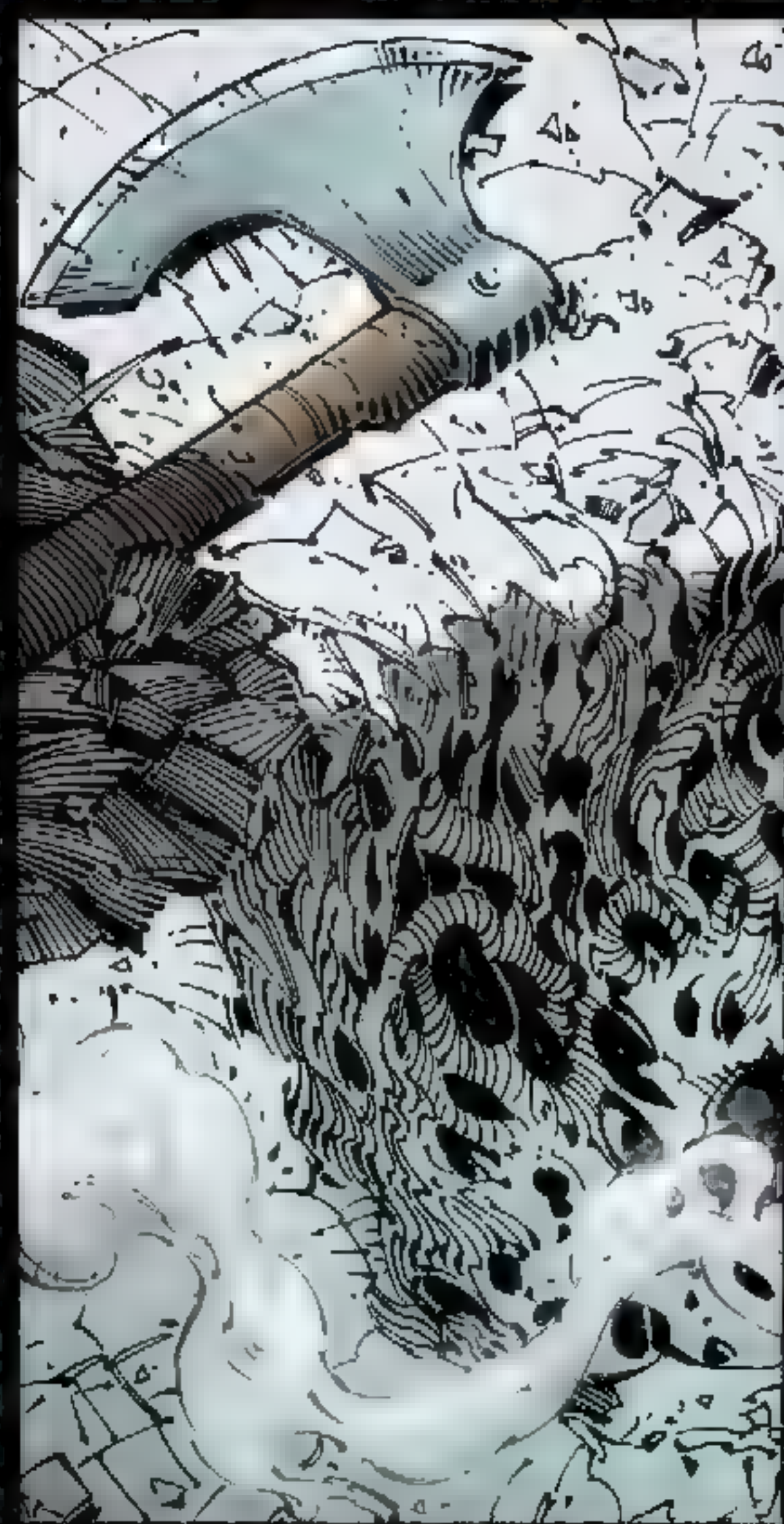
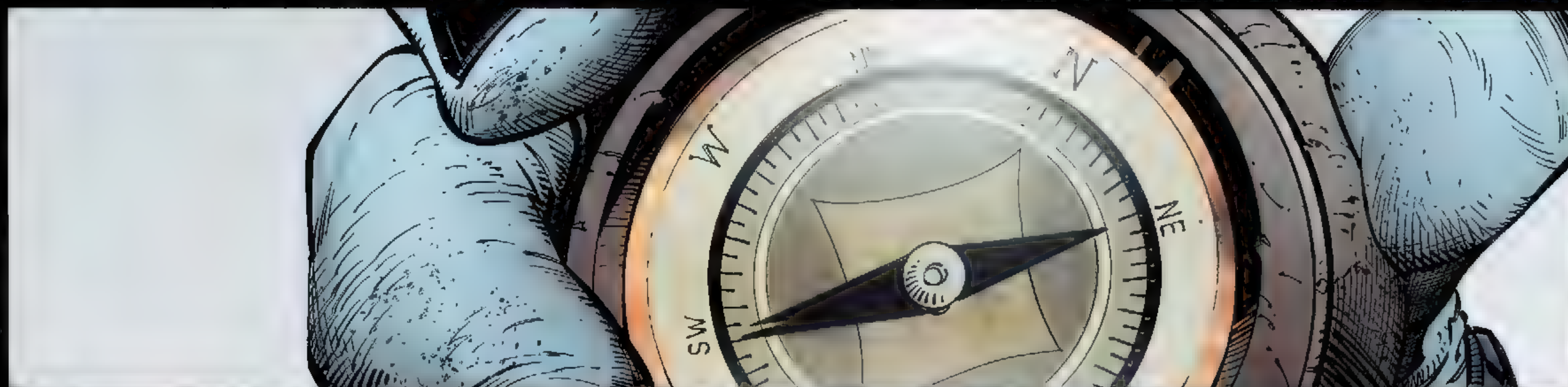
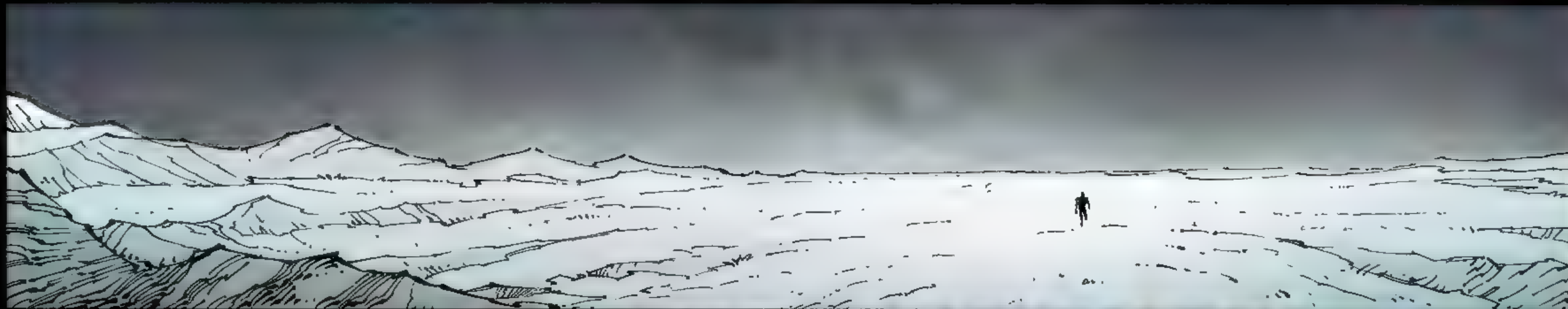
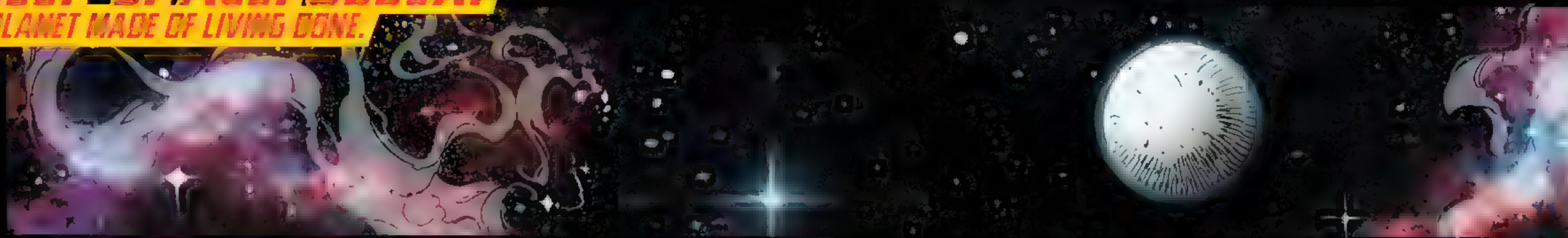






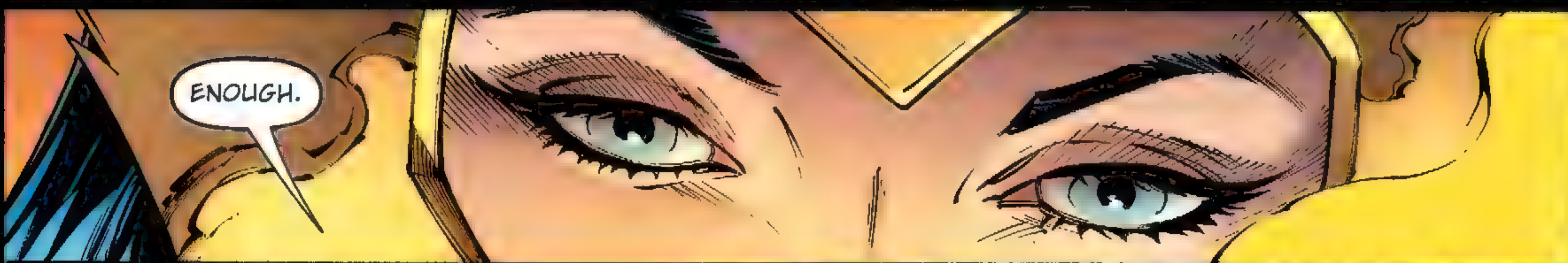
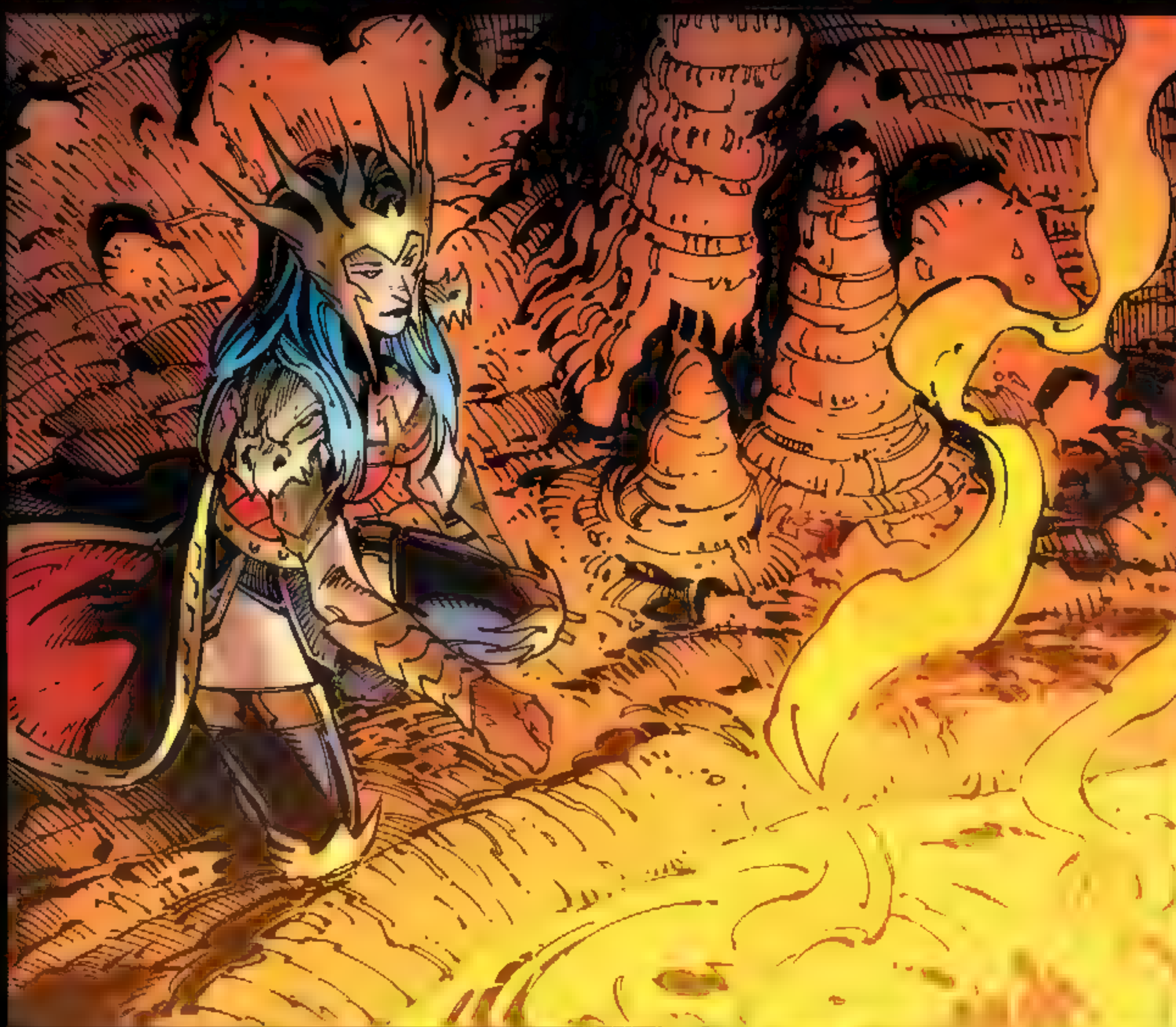
DEEP SPACE OSSEX

PLANET MADE OF LIVING DONE.





POWER CHORDS



ENOUGH.



DIANA, IF YOU GO DOWN THERE, HE MIGHT SENSE IT. HE MIGHT COME FOR YOU.

I AM NOT POWERFUL ENOUGH TO FIGHT BESIDE YOU ANYMORE.



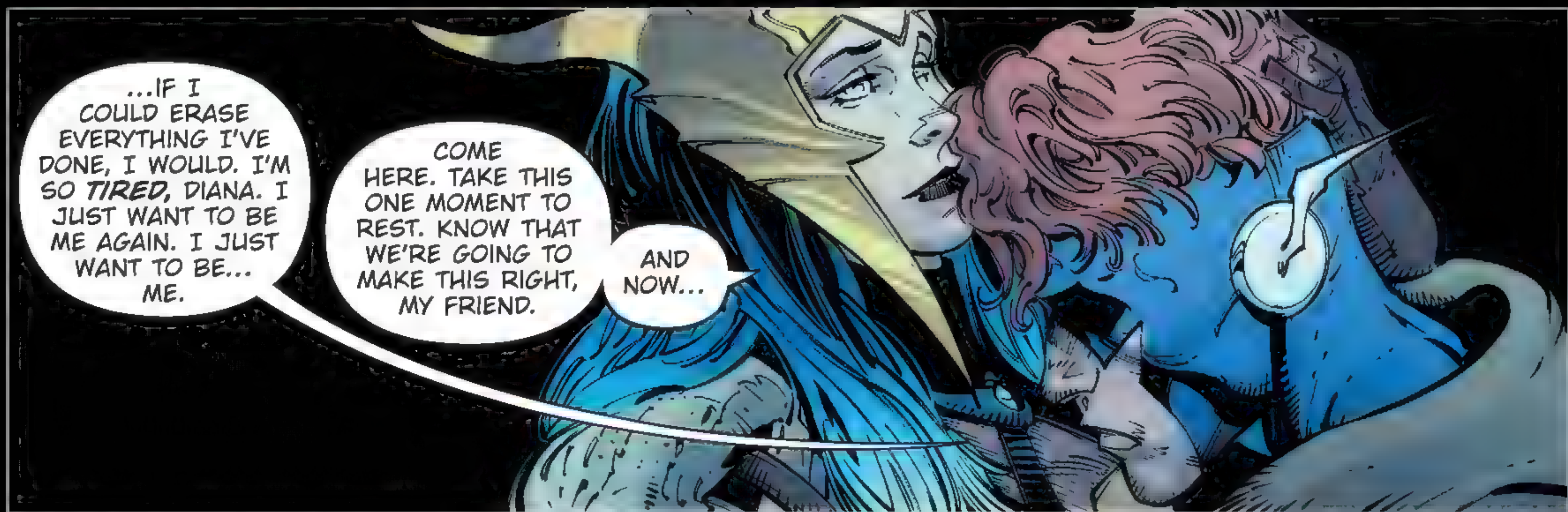
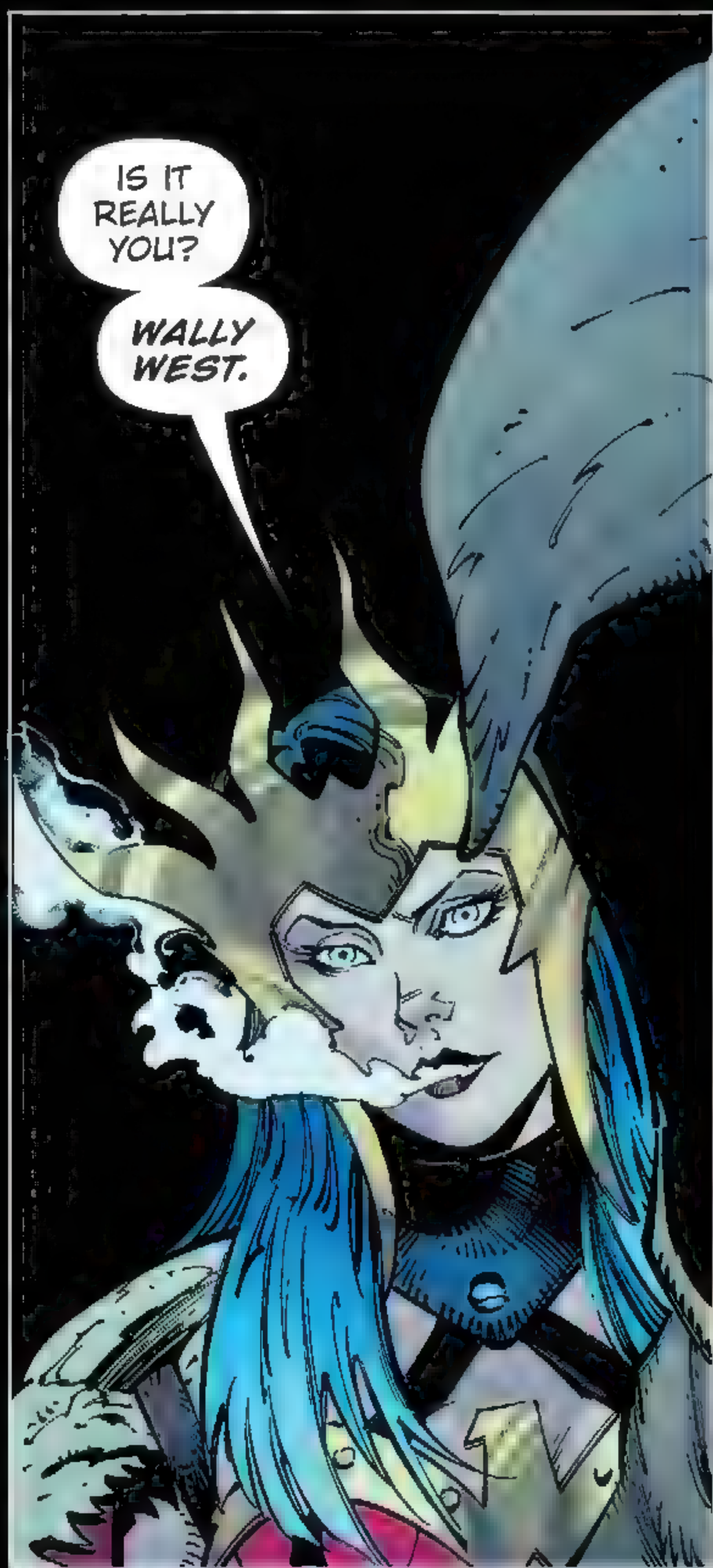
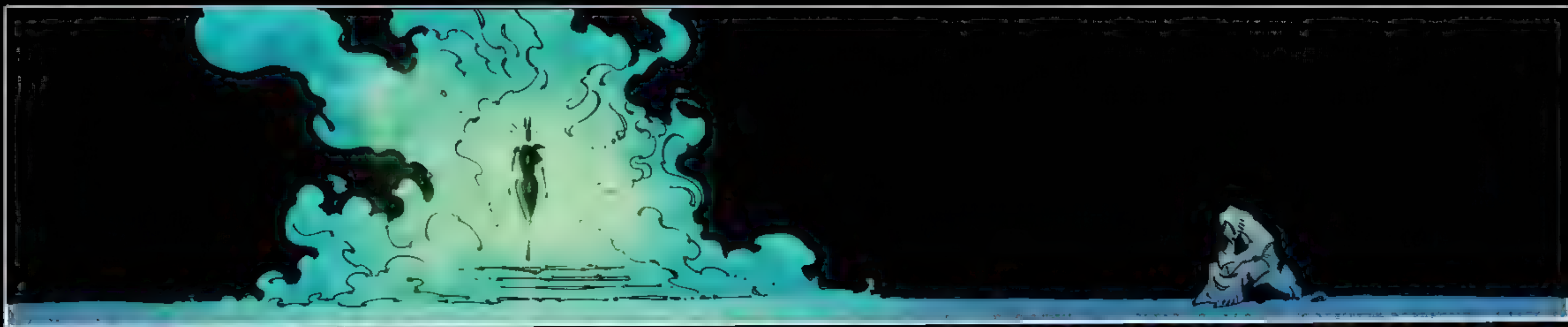
ALEC, YOU SHOULD RUN NOW. I CAN'T TAKE THIS DARKNESS ANYMORE, AND I CAN'T FIGHT THE WAY BRUCE WANTS.

THERE HAS TO BE A WAY BACK TO... TO TURN IT ALL BACK.



I...I WILL BE HERE WHEN YOU RETURN, READY TO FIGHT BESIDE YOU BEST I CAN.

THANK YOU, OLD FRIEND.



"TELL ME
HOW WE WIN."

"ALL RIGHT, BUT TO UNDERSTAND THE PATH FORWARD, YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THE PAST. I'VE TRAVELED THIS MULTIVERSE, AS OTHER FLASHES BEFORE ME, AND WHAT I LEARNED IS THAT **ALL** POWER IN OUR REALITY GATHERS AROUND TWO **POLES**.

"EVERY POSITIVE ENERGY IN OUR UNIVERSE--THE SPEED FORCE, THE EMOTIONAL SPECTRUM, THE FORCES OF **JUSTICE**--THEY ARE IN ESSENCE **CONNECTIVE**. THEY LINK US TO EACH OTHER AND TO OUR PAST, REMINDING US WE ARE PART OF ONE EPIC GENERATIONAL STORY.

"AT THE OTHER POLE, THE OPPOSING POWER RAGES. I HAVE COME TO CALL IT...**CRISIS ENERGY**. ANTI-LIFE, CHAOS MAGIC, THE FORCES OF DOOM. ALL POWER THAT DISRUPTS, THAT TAKES INSTEAD OF GIVES, POWER BASED IN SELFISHNESS, GREED, PREDATION.

"CRISIS ENERGY LOOKS TO SHATTER CONNECTION AND MAKE ONLY ONE MOMENT IMPORTANT. THERE IS ONLY NOW, THERE IS ONLY US, THERE IS ONLY **ME**."

"YOU STILL HAVE THIS CONNECTIVE ENERGY IN YOU, WALLY. CAN WE USE IT TO FIGHT?"

"NO, I'M FAR TOO WEAK. AND SHE...SHE IS FAR TOO STRONG.

"THESE BEINGS BIRTH A REALITY AND THEN DIE, GIVING THEMSELVES TO THE BABY MULTIVERSE.

"THROUGHOUT THE VOID, **BEINGS** LIKE PERPETUA ARE TASKED WITH STARTING MULTIVERSES. THEY DO THIS USING CONNECTIVE ENERGY, BORN OF THE PRESENCE, OF THE SOURCE.

"BUT THE MOTHER OF OUR MULTIVERSE, **PERPETUA**, STARTED OUR REALITY WITH CRISIS ENERGY.

"HER GOAL WAS TO CREATE A MULTIVERSE WITH NO MEMORY, ONE THAT WOULD LIVE FOREVER IN A SELF-RENEWING LOOP OF ITS OWN IMPORTANCE.

"A MULTIVERSE THAT WOULD PREY ON OTHERS, ABSORB THEM, AND FORGET THEM, VAMPIRIC AND ETERNALLY DEVOTED TO HER.

"WHEN HER KIND FOUND OUT WHAT SHE HAD DONE, THEY BEGAN OUR REALITY OVER AND TRAPPED HER IN THE **SOURCE WALL**, IN THE HOPES THAT EVENTUALLY, BY WATCHING OUR GROWTH, SHE MIGHT LEARN TO LOVE US.

"BUT INSTEAD, SHE **RAGED** INSIDE HER WALL. WHENEVER SHE COULD, SHE **WHISPERED** TO WHOEVER MIGHT HEAR HER. WHOEVER MIGHT LISTEN, STOKING DESIRE, GREED...INSTIGATING **CRISES**.

"IN OUR BATTLE WITH HER LAST SCION, BARBATOS, WE BROKE THE SOURCE WALL ITSELF, FREEING HER, AND SINCE THEN, SHE HAS BECOME POWERFUL AGAIN, NURSED TO HEALTH BY HER NEWEST ACOLYTE, **LEX LUTHOR**.

"NOT LONG AGO, A BEING FROM ANOTHER REALITY, BRIMMING WITH CONNECTIVE ENERGY, **DR. MANHATTAN**, TRIED TO MEND THE FRACTURES IN OUR MULTIVERSE, TO HEAL THE SCARS OF FORMER CRISES...

"...BUT HIS ATTEMPT DID NOT HAVE THE INTENDED EFFECT. SO THE QUINTESSENCE GATHERED THE ENERGY AND GAVE IT TO **YOU** AND THE LEAGUE TO FIGHT PERPETUA.

"YOU HARNESSSED ALL CONNECTIVE ENERGY, SHE HARNESSSED ALL CRISIS ENERGY, AND YOU BATTLED! WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CLASH I DON'T KNOW, ONLY THAT IT EXHAUSTED BOTH FORCES IN A BLAST SO POWERFUL IT BURNED OUT THE SUN."

THEN HOW IS PERPETUA STILL SO POWERFUL?

THE BATMAN WHO LAUGHS.

HE PROMISED PERPETUA IF SHE CHOSE HIM OVER LUTHOR, HE WOULD PROVIDE HER A CONDUIT TO THE DARK MULTIVERSE, WHERE THE GREATEST CRISES ARE FOREVER HAPPENING, AS LONG AS WE REMEMBER THEM.

THAT'S WHY THEY KEPT US ALIVE...

EXACTLY.

MAYBE...MAYBE WE CAN BEAT HER AT HER OWN GAME. WHAT IF WE RE-ENTER THOSE CRISES AND HARNESS THAT ENERGY FOR OURSELVES, USE IT TO RESHAPE THE UNIVERSE OUR OWN WAY?

YOU MEAN...

I MEAN WE--

CREATE THE FIRST ANTI-CRISIS.

I LOVE THAT. YA KNOW, IF YOU WERE REALLY SMART, YOU'D CALL THE TWO ENERGIES ANTI-CRISIS AND DIRECT-CRISIS. GET IT? AC AND DC.

BUT GO ON. PLEASE. PRETEND I'M NOT HERE.

STAY BACK, DEMON.

ALL YOUR FRIENDS ARE IN MY PRISON ON NEW APOKOLIPS. I COULD HAVE THEM KILLED WITH A WORD.

YOU KILL THEM AND THEN NO ONE WILL REMEMBER THE CRISES. YOU'LL NO LONGER HAVE A WAY TO FEED POWER TO YOUR QUEEN.

AH, BUT I HAVE MY OWN PLANS...SO LET'S NOT FIGHT?

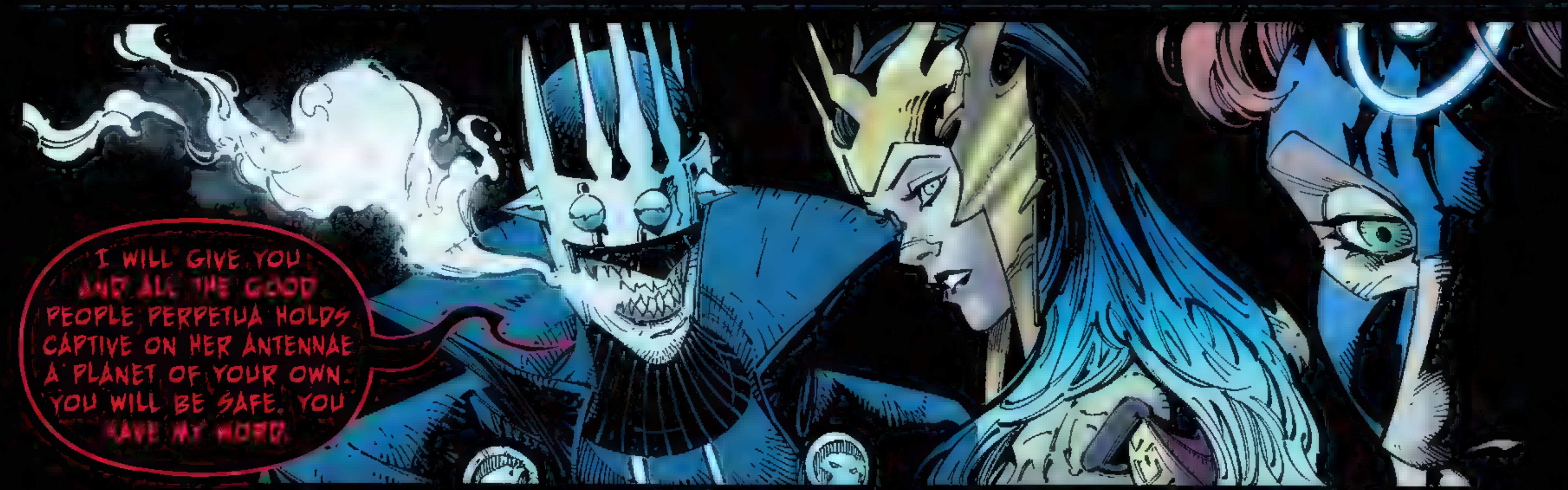
"RIGHT, NOW, MY KNIGHTS HAVE SWAMP THING AT THEIR MERCY."

HOW DO YOU LIKE THEM ARMS, @#%.

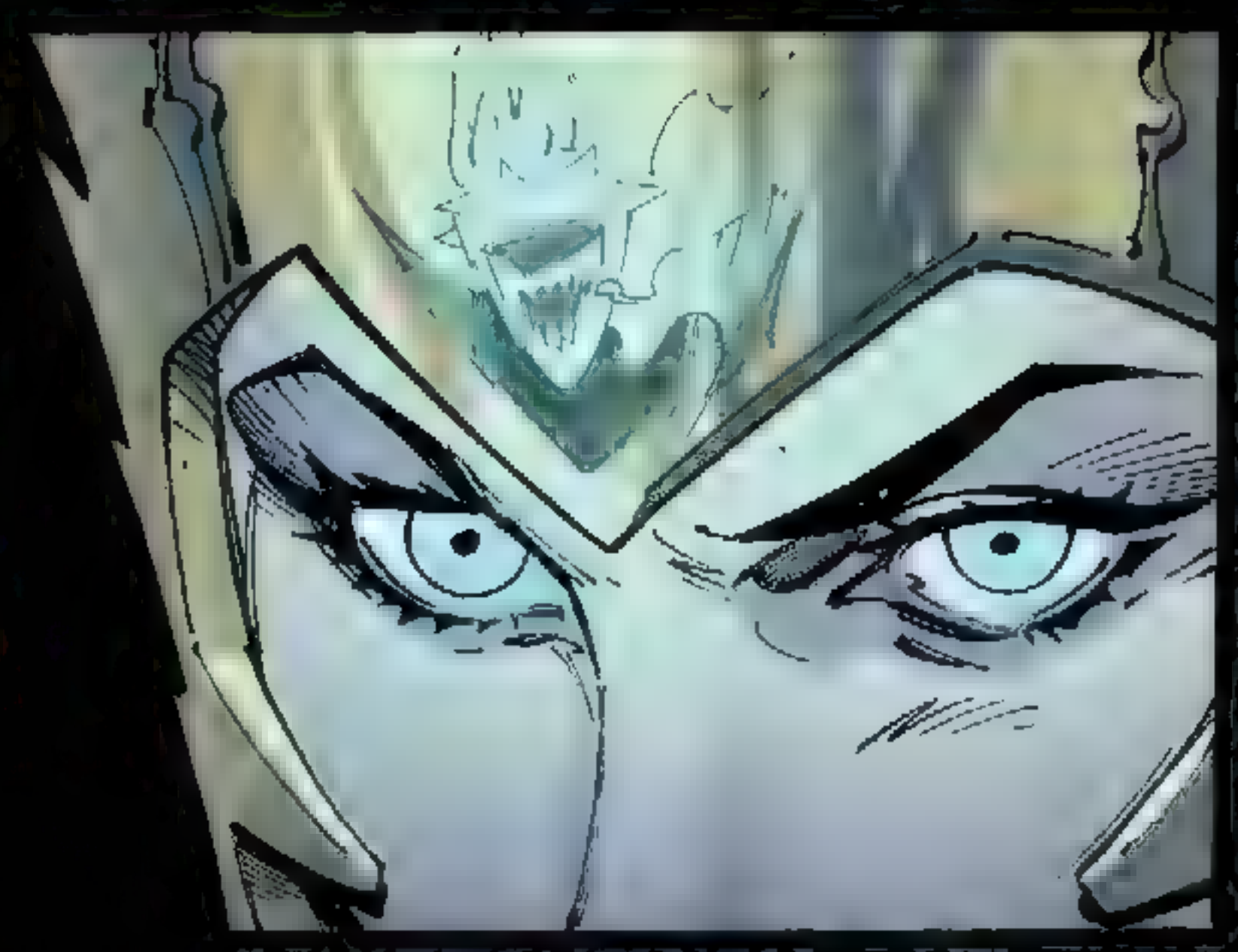
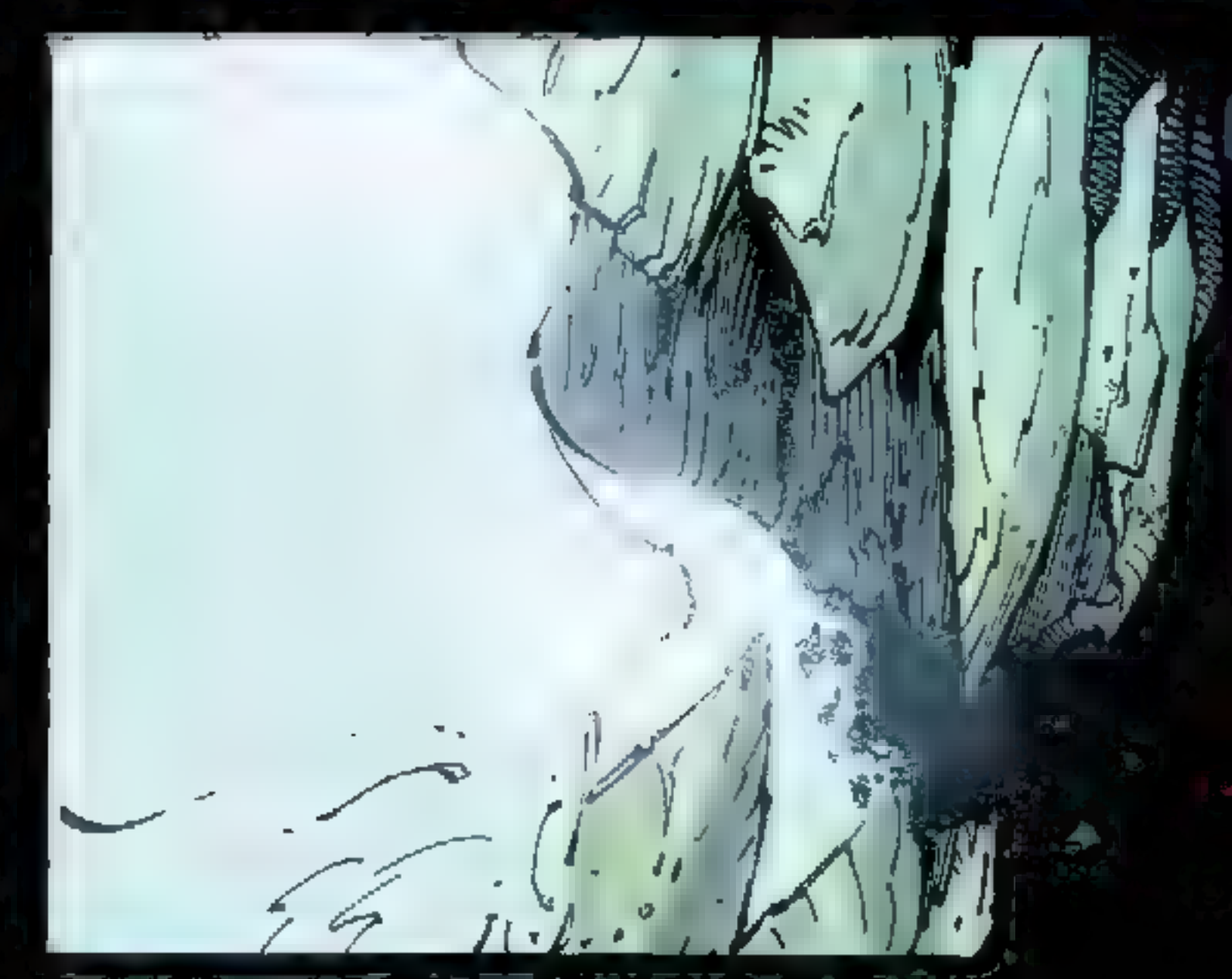
NOW YOU
HELP ME, YOU
PLAY YOUR PART,
AND ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF THIS, I
WILL HONOR MY
PROMISE.



I WILL GIVE YOU
AND ALL THE GOOD
PEOPLE PERPETHA HOLDS
CAPTIVE ON HER ANTENNAE
A PLANET OF YOUR OWN.
YOU WILL BE SAFE. YOU
HAVE MY WORD.



BUT FIGHT
ME, AND I WILL
HURT YOU AND YOUR
FRIENDS, IN WAYS
YOU CAN'T EVEN
IMAGINE.



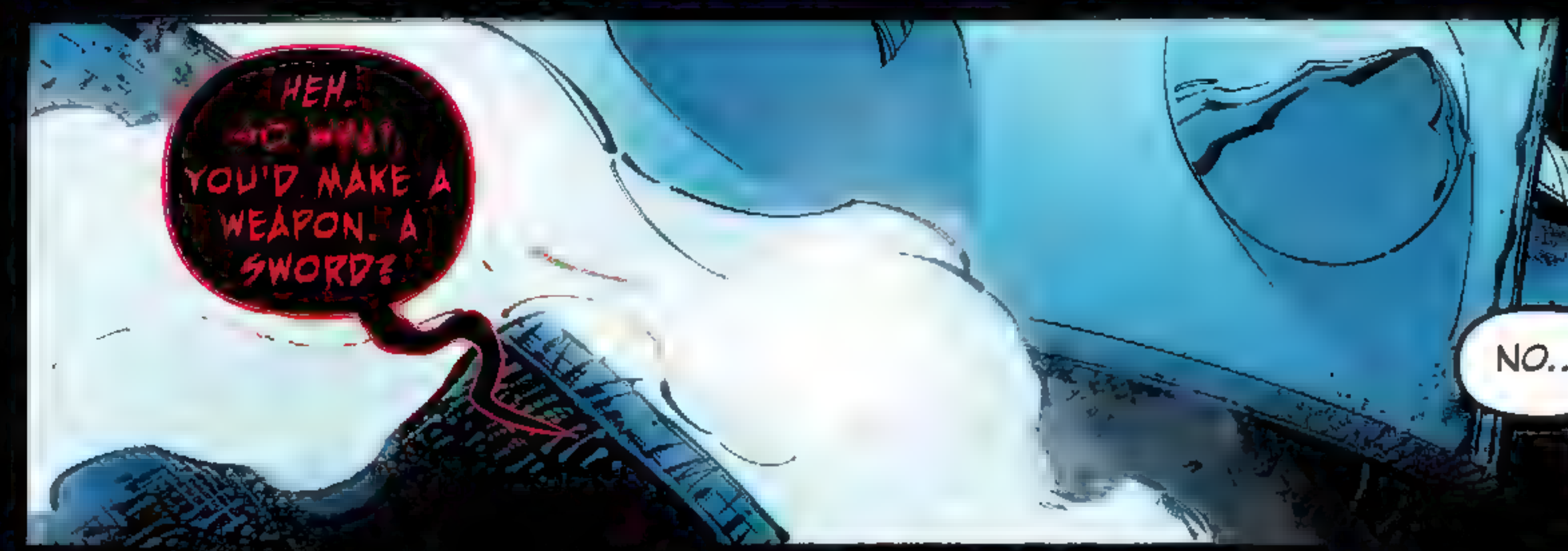
YOU
CAN'T OUT-
PLAN ME,
DIANA.

LET ME GUESS
THE STRATEGY HERE. FIRST
YOU KNOCK ME OUT, THEN YOU
GO DIP YOUR ARMOR IN THE
CAULDRON WHERE THE INVISIBLE
JET WAS MELTED DOWN, AND
SUDDENLY, YOU HAVE A
SHIELD TO HIDE
BEHIND.



SEE,
THAT'S THE THING,
MONSTER. YOU
KNOW **BRUCE**. HE'D
MAKE A SHIELD. BUT
THIS ISN'T HIS
STORY.

HEH.
SO WHAT?
YOU'D MAKE A
WEAPON. A
SWORD?



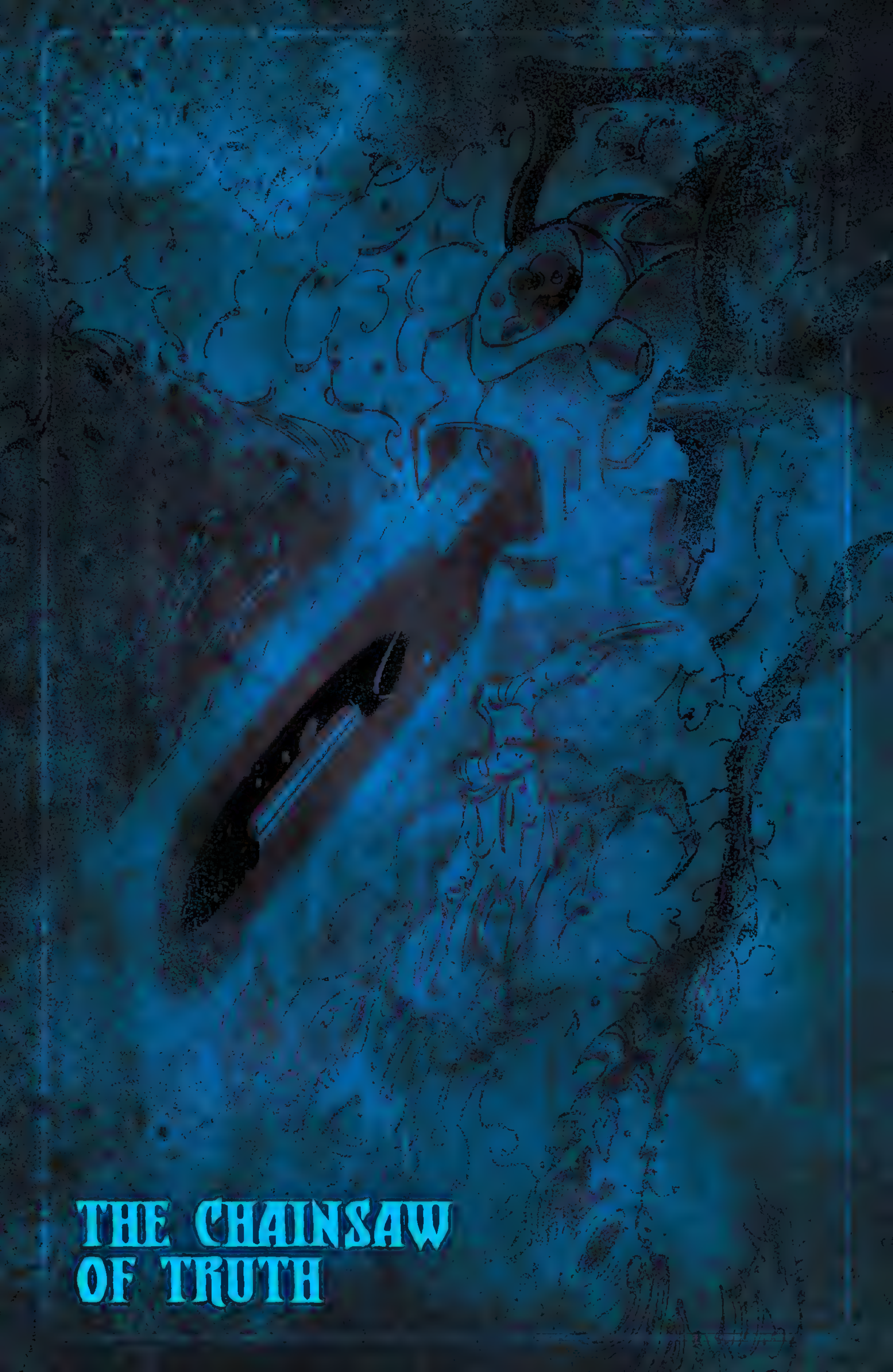
NO...
...I'D
ALREADY
HAVE MADE
IT.



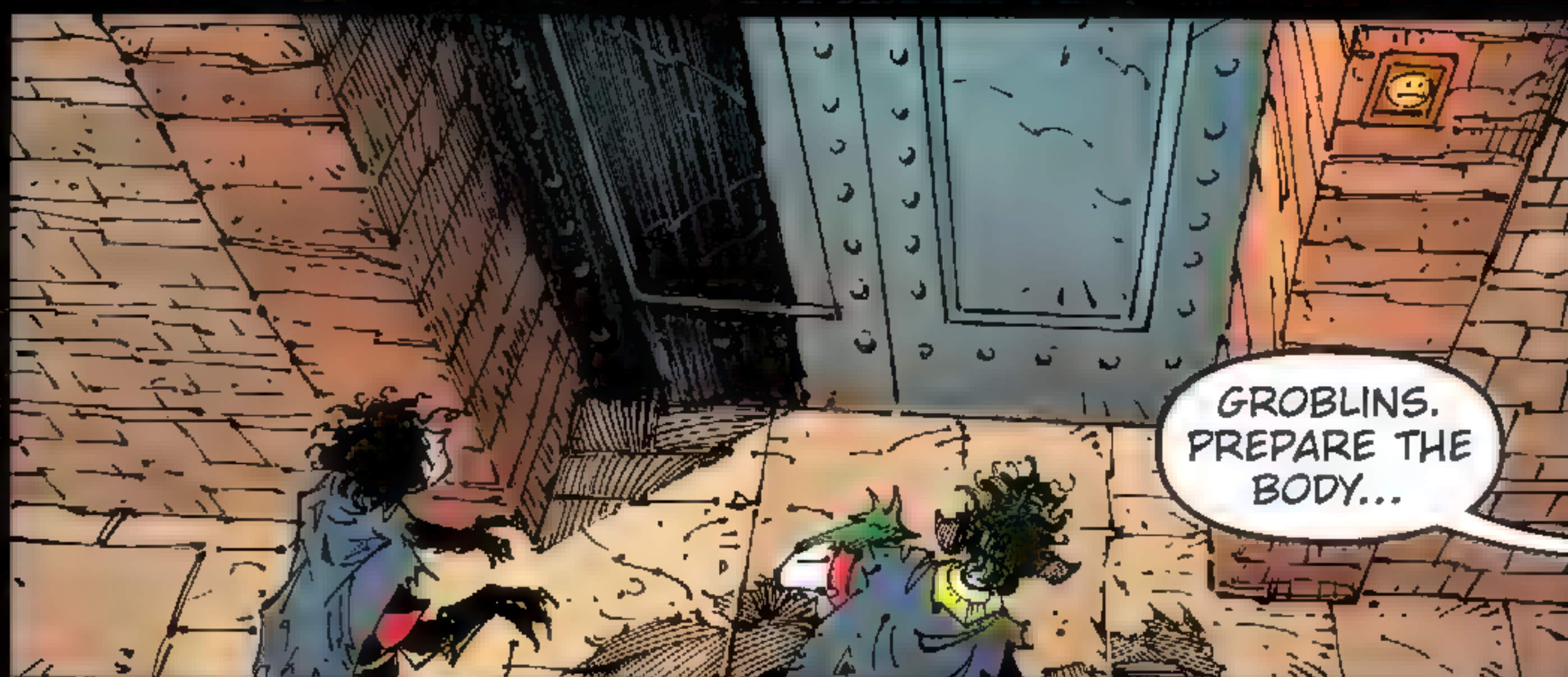
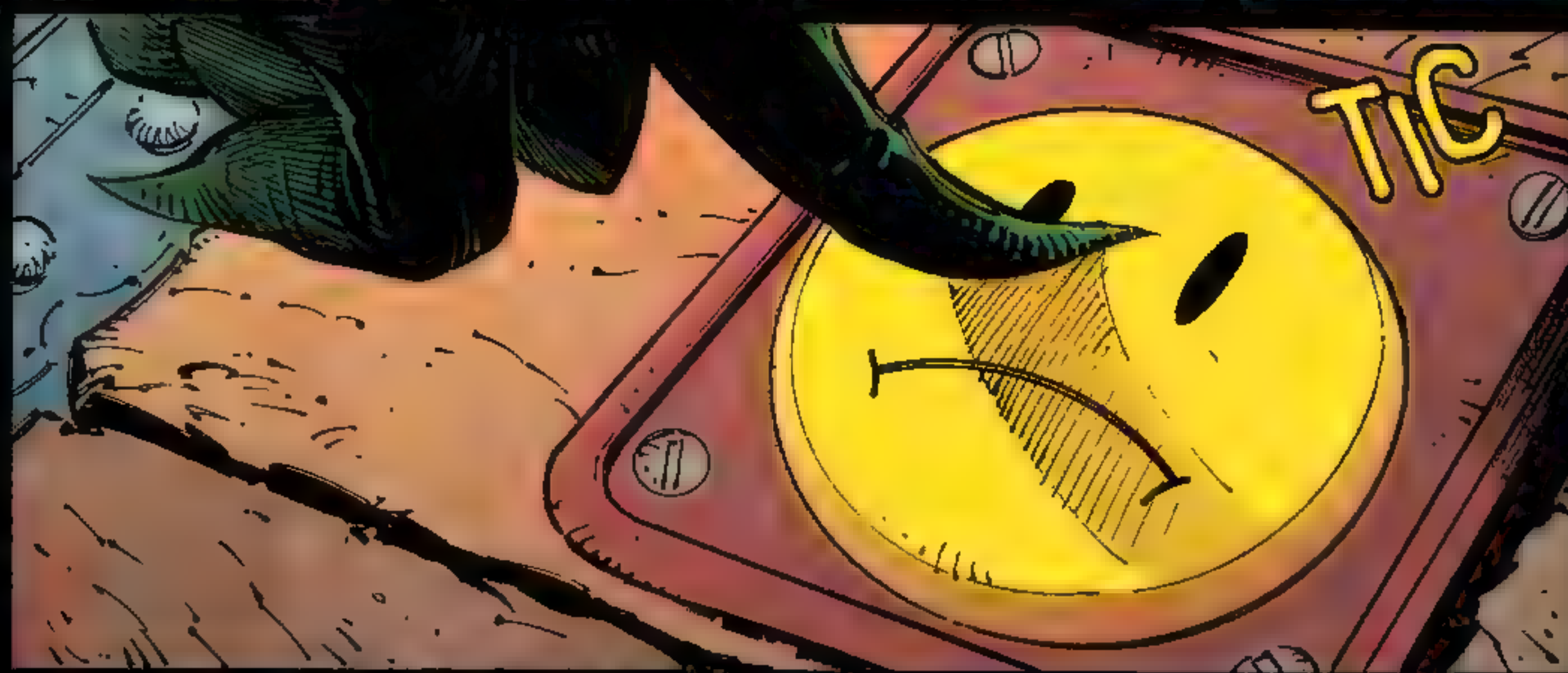
AND IT
WOULDN'T
JUST BE A
SWORD...

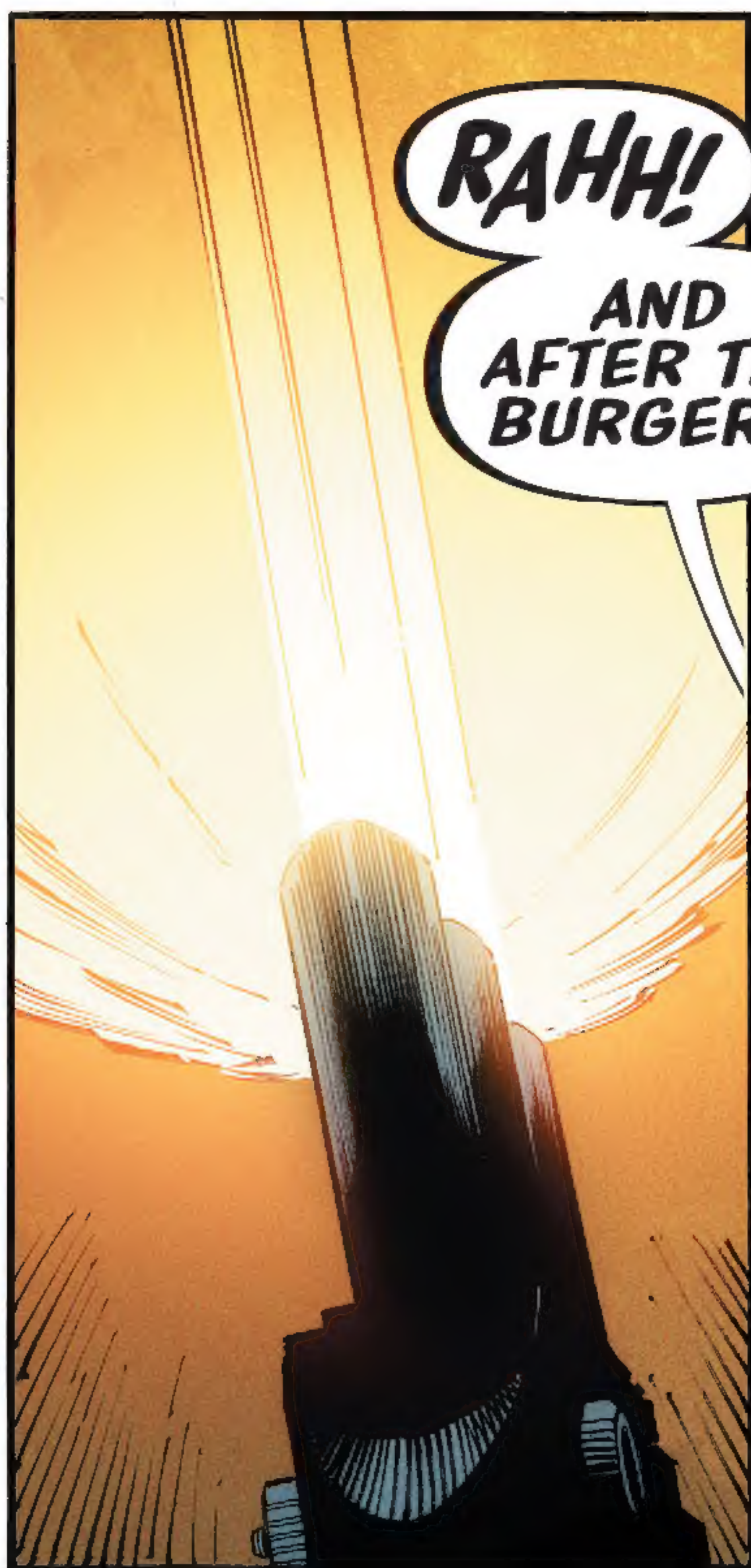






THE CHAINSAW OF TRUTH





RAHH!
AND AFTER THE BURGER?!



I'LL TELL YOU
WHAT AFTER THE
BURGER!

ROCK.

YOU'RE
GOING TO TAKE
THOSE STINKING
FRIES AND RAM
THEM--

ROCK.



COME ON!
THE FIGHT'S
HAPPENING
NOW!



NOW?



THE BIG ONE?
ALL OF US?
=COUGH=

ONE
LAST FIGHT.
EVERYONE
TOGETHER.

TO BE CONTINUED

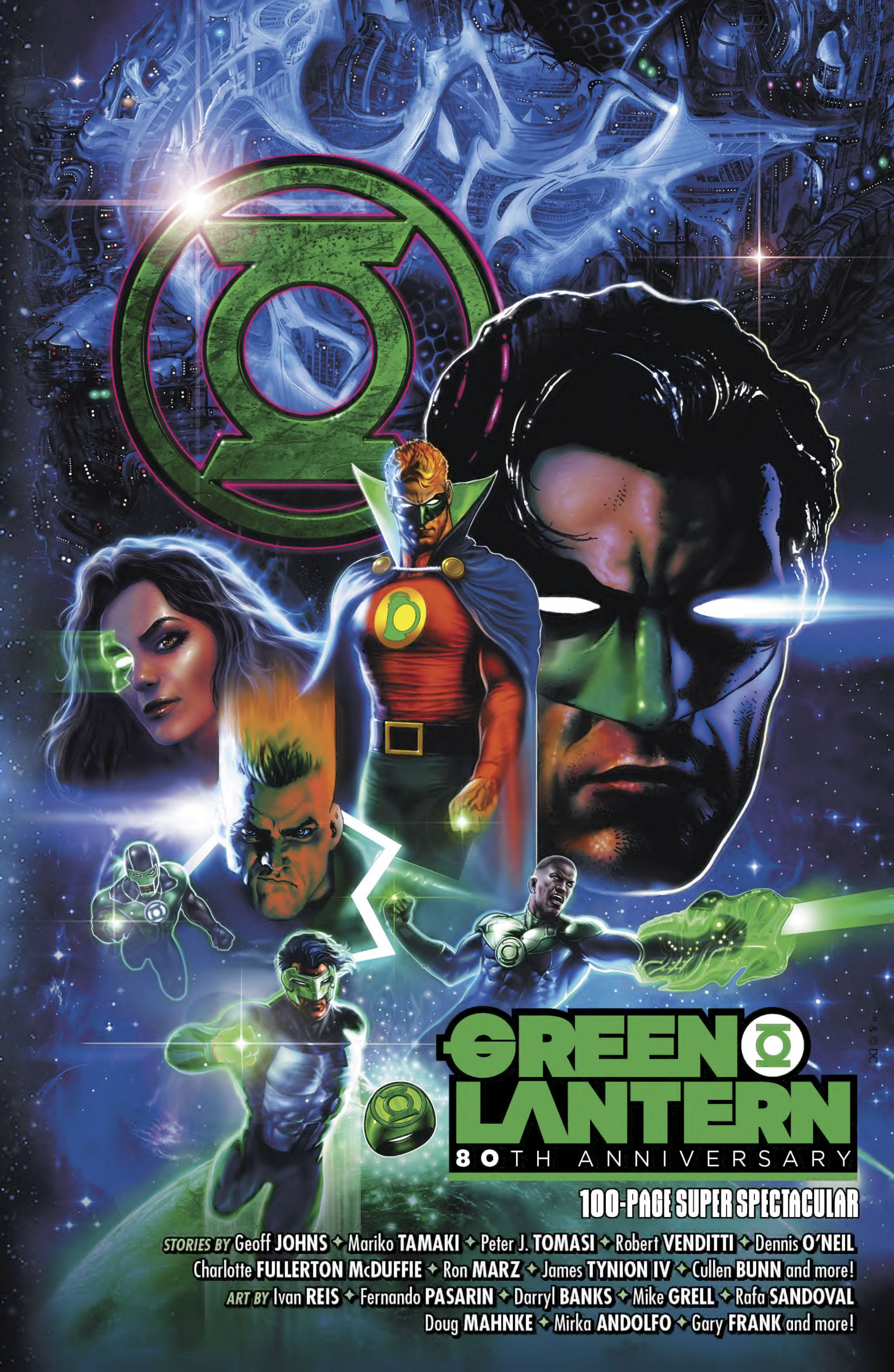
CELEBRATE 80 YEARS OF BRIGHTEST DAYS AND BLACKEST NIGHTS!



ON SALE NOW!
A Prestige Format One-Shot

DECADE VARIANT COVERS BY
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MAIN COVER BY Liam SHARP



GREEN LANTERN
80TH ANNIVERSARY

100-PAGE SUPER SPECTACULAR

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ART BY Ivan REIS ♦ Fernando PASARIN ♦ Darryl BANKS ♦ Mike GRELL ♦ Rafa SANDOVAL
Doug MAHNKE ♦ Mirka ANDOLFO ♦ Gary FRANK and more!

WE KNOW THAT

***DARK NIGHTS: DEATH METAL* NO. 1**

JUST BLEW YOUR MINDS, BUT THE SHOW ISN'T OVER YET.

DC Nation Backstage Pass will bring you behind-the-scenes material and bonus content that will make you bang your heads at the end of every issue. So how about a glimpse at *Dark Nights: Death Metal* #2's cover—featuring Wonder Woman roaming the Dark Multiverse in a Batman monster truck with Swamp Thing riding shotgun? Yep, you read that right.

GREG CAPULLO HIMSELF PUT IT BEST:

"ARE YOU GUYS READY? NAH. YOU AIN'T READY. TRUST ME."

Here's how the cover came together, from Greg Capullo's pencils, Jonathan Glapion's inks, and FCO Plascencia's colors.



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The Last Kryptonian-DCP

